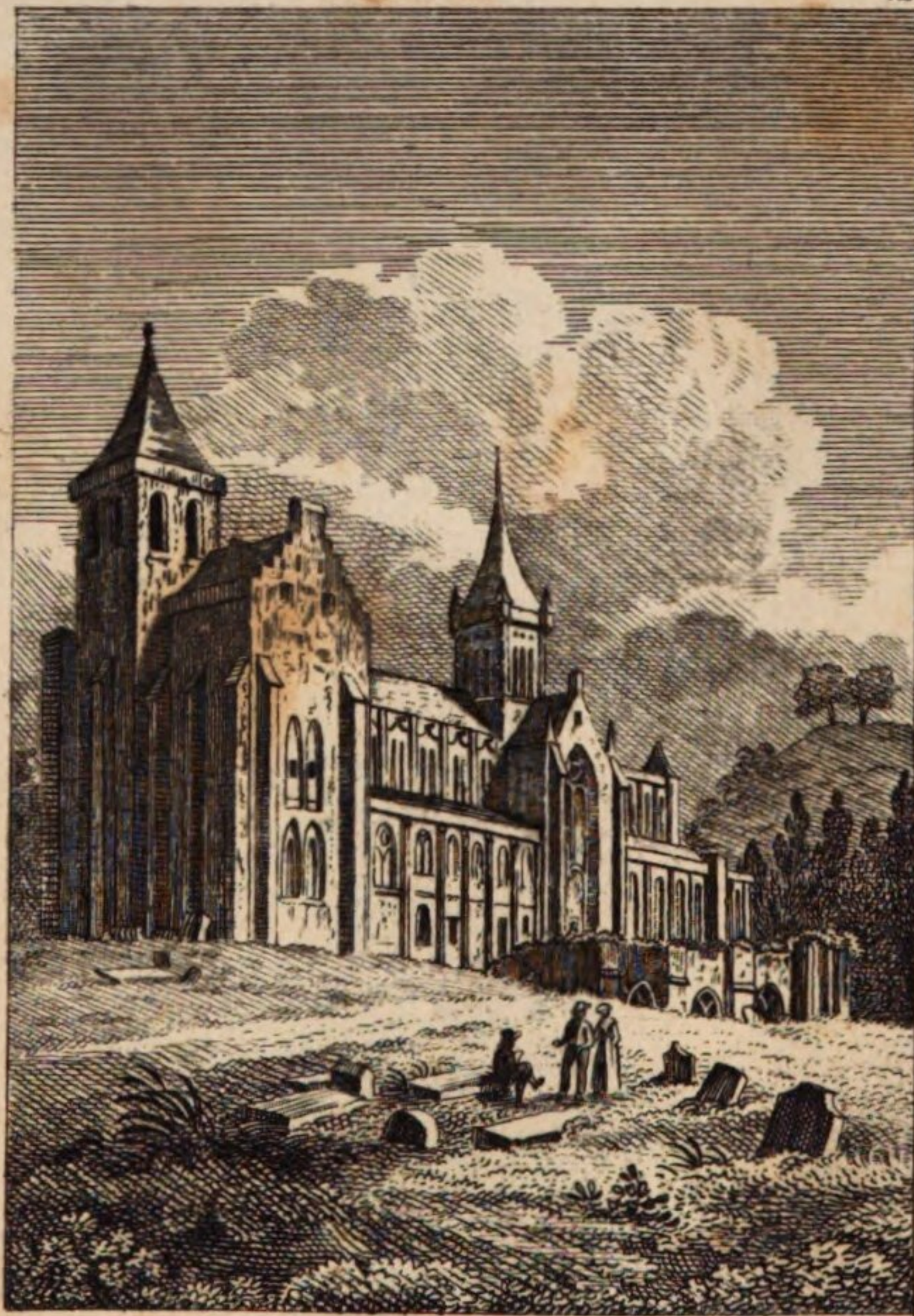




*Rob Roy. II.
High Church, Glasgow.*

Forrest 1822

THE
WORKS
OF
WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

VOL. XXIII.
ROMANCES VOL XIV.

ZWICKAU,
PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMANN.

1822.

(12)

THE

W O R L D

OF

NAVIGATION

AND

TRAVEL

IN ALL PARTS OF THE GLOBE

AND

THE

INDIAN ARCHipelago

ROB ROY.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY."

*For why? Because the good old rule
Sufficeth them; the simple plan,
That they should take, who have the power,
And they should keep who can.*

Rob Roy's Grave. — WORDSWORTH.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

~~~~~  
ZWICKAU,

PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMMANN.

1822.



FOR ROY.

BY THE

ATTORNEY OF THE WAYLERS.

For the purpose of the said Act, the  
Attorney of the Waylers, the said  
Attorney of the Waylers, the said  
Attorney of the Waylers, the said

Attorney of the Waylers, the said

Attorney of the Waylers, the said

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Vol. II.

Printed by the Waylers, the said

WICKHAM

THE WAYLERS, THE SAID

Attorney of the Waylers, the said



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CHAPTER XI.

What gars you gaunt, my merry men a'?

What gars ye look sae dreary?

What gars ye hing your head sae sair

In the castle of Balwearie?

Old Scotch Ballad.

THE next morning chanced to be Sunday, a day peculiarly hard to be got rid of at Osbaldistone-Hall; for after the formal religious service of the morning had been performed, at which all the family regularly attended, it was hard to say upon which individual, Rashleigh and Miss Vernon excepted, the fiend of ennui descended with the most abundant outpouring of his spirit. To speak of my yesterday's embarrassment amused Sir Hildebrand for several minutes, and he congratulated me on my deliverance from Morpeth or Hexham jail, as he

would have done if I had fallen in attempting to clear a five-barred gate, and got up without hurting myself.

«Hast had a lucky turn, lad; but do na be over venturous again. What, man! the king's road is free to all men, be they Whigs, be they Tories!»

«On my word, sir, I am innocent of interrupting it; and it is the most provoking thing on earth, that every person will take it for granted that I am accessory to a crime which I despise and detest, and which would, moreover, deservedly forfeit my life to the laws of my country.»

«Well, well, lad; even so be it; I ask no questions — no man bound to tell on himsell — that's fair play, or the devil's in't.»

Rashleigh here came to my assistance; but I could not help thinking that his arguments were calculated rather as hints to his father to put on a show of acquiescence in my declaration of innocence, than fully to establish it.

«In your own house, my dear sir — and your own nephew — you will not surely persist in hurting his feelings, by seeming to discredit what he is so strongly interested in affirming. No doubt, you are fully deserving of all his confidence, and I am sure were there any thing you could do to assist him in this strange affair,

he would have recourse to your goodness. But my cousin Frank has been dismissed as an innocent man, and no one is entitled to suppose him otherwise. For my part, I have not the least doubt of his innocence; and our family honour, I conceive, requires that we should maintain it with tongue and sword, against the whole country."

"Rashleigh," said his father, looking fixedly at him, "thou art a sly loon — thou hast ever been too cunning for me, and too cunning for most folks. Have a care thou prove na too cunning for thyself — two faces under one hood is no true heraldry. — And since we talk of heraldry, I'll go and read Gwillym."

This resolution he intimated with a yawn, resistless as that of the Goddess in the Dunciad, which was responsively echoed by his giant-sons, as they dispersed in quest of the pastimes to which their minds severally inclined them. — Percie to discuss a pot of March beer with the steward in the buttery, — Thorncliff to cut a pair of cudgels, and fix them in their wicker-hilts, John to dress May-flies, — Dickon to play at pitch and toss by himself — his right hand against his left, — and Wilfred to bite his thumbs, and hum himself into a slumber which should last till dinner-time, if possible. Miss Vernon had retired to the library.

Rashleigh and I were left alone in the old hall, from which the servants, with their usual bustle and awkwardness, had at length contrived to hurry the remains of our substantial breakfast. I took the opportunity to upbraid him with the manner in which he had spoken of my affair to his father, which I frankly stated was highly offensive to me, as it seemed rather to exhort Sir Hildebrand to conceal his suspicions, than to root them out.

„Why, what can I do, my dear friend?“ replied Rashleigh; „my father's disposition is so tenacious of suspicions of all kinds, when once they take root, which, to do him justice, does not easily happen, that I have always found it the best way to silence him upon such subjects, instead of arguing with him. Thus I get the better of the weeds which I cannot eradicate, by cutting them over as often as they appear, until at length they die away of themselves. There is neither wisdom nor profit in disputing with such a mind as Sir Hildebrand's, which hardens itself against conviction, and believes in its own inspirations as firmly as we good catholics do in those of the Holy Father of Rome.“

„It is very hard though, that I should live in the house of a man, and he a near relation

too, who will persist in believing me guilty of a highway robbery."

„My father's foolish opinion, if one may give that epithet to any opinion of a father's, does not affect your real innocence; and as to the disgrace of the fact, depend on it, that, considered in all its bearings, political as well as moral, Sir Hildebrand regards it as a meritorious action — a weakening of the enemy — a spoiling of the Amalekites — and you will stand the higher in his regard for your supposed accession to it."

„I desire no man's regard, Mr Rashleigh, on such terms as must sink me in my own; and I think these injurious suspicions will afford a very good reason for quitting Osbaldistone-Hall, which I shall do whenever I can communicate on the subject with my father."

The dark countenance of Rashleigh, though little accustomed to betray its master's feelings, exhibited a suppressed smile, which he instantly chastened by a sigh.

„You are a happy man, Frank — you go and come, as the wind bloweth where it listeth. With your address, state, and talents, you will soon find circles where they will be more valued, than amid the dull inmates of this mansion; while I —" he paused.

„And what is there in your lot that can make

you or any one envy mine, an outcast, as I may almost term myself, from my father's house and favour?"

„Ay, but," answered Rashleigh, „consider the gratified sense of independence which you must have attained by a very temporary sacrifice, for such I am sure yours will prove to be — consider the power of acting as a free agent, of cultivating your own talents in the way to which your taste determines you, and in which you are well qualified to distinguish yourself — Fame and freedom are cheaply purchased by a few weeks residence in the North, even though your place of exile be Osbaldistone-Hall. — A second Ovid in Thrace, you have not his reasons for writing *Tristia*."

„I do not know," said I, blushing as became a young scribbler, „how you should be so well acquainted with my truant studies."

„There was an emissary of your father's here some time since, a young coxcomb, one Twineall, who informed me concerning your secret sacrifices to the muses, and added, that some of your verses had been greatly admired by the best judges."

Tresham, I believe you are guiltless of having ever essayed to build the lofty rhyme; but you must have known in your day many an apprentice and fellow craft, if not some of the

master-masons in the temple of Apollo. Vanity is their universal foible, from him who decorated the shades of Twickenham, to the veriest scribbler whom he has lashed in his *Dunciad*. I had my own share of this common failing, and without considering how little likely this young fellow Twineall was, by taste and habits, to be acquainted either with one or two little pieces of poetry, which I had at times insinuated into Button's coffee-house, or to report the opinion of the critics who frequented that resort of wit and literature, almost instantly gorged the bait, which Rashleigh perceiving, improved his opportunity by a diffident, yet apparently very anxious request, to be permitted to see some of my manuscript productions.

"You shall give me an evening in my own apartment," he continued; "for I must soon lose the charms of literary society for the drudgery of commerce, and the coarse every-day avocations of the world. I repeat it, that my compliance with my father's wishes for the advantage of my family, is indeed a sacrifice, especially considering the calm and peaceful profession to which my education destined me."

I was vain, but not a fool, and this hypocrisy was too strong for me to swallow — "You would not persuade me," I replied, "that you really regret to exchange the situation of an

obscure catholic priest, with all its privations, for wealth and society, and the pleasures of the world?"

Rashleigh saw that he had coloured his affectation of moderation too highly, and, after a second's pause, during which, I suppose, he calculated the degree of candour which it was necessary to use with me, (that being a quality of which he was never needlessly profuse) he answered with a smile, — "At my age, to be condemned, as you say, to wealth and the world, does not, indeed, sound so alarming as perhaps it ought to do. But, with pardon be it spoken, you have mistaken my destination — a catholic priest, if you will, but not an obscure one — No, sir, Rashleigh Osbaldistone will be more obscure, should he rise to be the richest citizen in London, than he might have been as a member of a church, whose ministers, as some one says, 'set their sandall'd feet on princes.' — My family interest at a certain exiled court is high, and the weight which that court ought to possess, and does possess at Rome, is yet higher — my talents not altogether inferior to the education I have received — In sober judgment, I might have looked forward to high eminence in the church — in the dream of fancy, to the very highest — Why might not, (he added, laughing, for it was part

of his manner to keep much of his discourse apparently betwixt jest and earnest,) — why might not Cardinal Osbaldistone have swayed the fortunes of empires, well-born and well-connected, as well as the low-born Mazarin, or Alberoni the son of an Italian gardener?"

"Nay, I can give you no reason to the contrary. But in your place I should not much regret losing the chance of such precarious and invidious elevation."

"Neither would I," he replied, "were I sure that my present establishment was more certain; but that must depend upon circumstances, which I can only learn by experience — the disposition of your father for example."

"Confess the truth without finesse, Rashleigh; you would willingly know something of him from me?"

"Since, like Die Vernon, you make a point of following the banner of the good knight Sincerity, I reply — certainly."

"Well, then, you will find in my father a man who has followed the paths of thriving more for the exercise they afforded to his talents, than for the love of the gold with which they are strewed. His active mind would have been happy in any situation which gave it scope for exertion, though that exertion had been its

sole reward. But his wealth has accumulated, because, moderate and frugal in his habits, no new sources of expence have occurred to dispose of his increasing income. He is a man who hates dissimulation in others; never practises it himself; and is peculiarly alert in discovering motives through the colouring of language. Himself silent by habit, he is readily disgusted by great talkers; the rather, that the circumstances by which he is most interested afford no great scope for conversation. He is severely strict in the duties of religion; but you have no reason to fear his interference with yours, for he regards toleration as a sacred principle of political economy. But if you have any jacobitical partialities, as is naturally to be supposed, you will do well to suppress them in his presence, as well as the least tendency to the highflying or Tory principles; for he holds both in utter detestation. For the rest, his word is his own bond, and must be the law of all who act under him. He will fail in his duty to no one, and will permit no one to fail towards him; to cultivate his favour, you must execute his commands, instead of echoing his sentiments. His greatest failings arise out of prejudices connected with his own profession, or rather his exclusive devotion to it, which makes him see little worthy of praise or atten-

tion, unless it be, in some measure, connected with commerce."

"O rare-painted portrait!" exclaimed Rashleigh, when I was silent — "Vandyke was a dauber to you, Frank. I see thy sire before me in all his strength and weakness, loving and honouring the King as a sort of lord mayor of the empire, or chief of the board of trade; — venerating the Commons, for the acts regulating the export trade; — and respecting the Peers, because the Lord Chancellor sits on a wool-sack."

"Mine was a likeness, Rashleigh; yours is a caricature. But in return for the *carte de pays* which I have unfolded to you, give me some lights on the geography of the unknown lands —"

"On which you are wrecked," said Rashleigh. "It is not worth while; it is no Isle of Calypso, umbrageous with shade and intricate with sylvan labyrinth — but a bare ragged Northumbrian moor, with as little to interest curiosity as to delight the eye — you may descry it in all its nakedness in half an hour's survey, as well as if I were to lay it down before you by line and compass."

"O, but something there is, worthy a more attentive survey — What say you to Miss Vernon? Does not she form an interesting object

in the landscape, were all around as rude as Iceland's coast?"

I could plainly perceive that Rashleigh disliked the topic now presented to him; but my frank communication had given me the advantageous title to make enquiries in my turn. Rashleigh felt this, and found himself obliged to follow my lead, however difficult he might find it to play his cards successfully. "I have known less of Miss Vernon," he said, "for some time, than I was wont to do formerly. In early age I was her tutor; but as she advanced towards womanhood, my various avocations, — the gravity of the profession to which I was destined, — the peculiar nature of her engagements, — our mutual situation, in short, rendered a close and constant intimacy dangerous and improper. I believe Miss Vernon might consider my reserve as unkindness, but it was my duty; I felt as much as she seemed to do, when compelled to give way to prudence. But where was the safety in cultivating an intimacy with a beautiful and susceptible girl, whose heart, you are aware, must be given either to the cloister or to a betrothed husband?"

"The cloister or a betrothed husband?" I echoed — "Is that the alternative destined for Miss Vernon?"

"It is indeed," said Rashleigh, with a sigh.

“I need not, I suppose, caution you against the danger of cultivating too closely the friendship of Miss Vernon; you are a man of the world, and know how far you can indulge yourself in her society, with safety to yourself and justice to her. But I warn you, that, considering her ardent temper, you must let your experience keep guard over her as well as yourself, for the specimen of yesterday may serve to show her extreme thoughtlessness and neglect of decorum.”

There was something, I was sensible, of truth, as well as good sense, in all this; it seemed to be given as a friendly warning, and I had no right to take it amiss; yet I felt I could with pleasure have run Rashleigh Osbaldistone through the body all the time he was speaking.

The deuce take his insolence! was my internal meditation. Would he wish me to infer, that Miss Vernon had fallen in love with that hatchet-face of his, and become degraded so low as to require his shyness to cure her of an imprudent passion? I will have his meaning from him, was my resolution, if I should drag it out with cart-ropes.

For this purpose, I placed my temper under as accurate a guard as I could, and observed, “That, for a lady of her good sense and acquired accomplishments, it was to be regretted

that Miss Vernon's manners were rather blunt and rustic."

"Frank and unreserved, at least, to the extreme," replied Rashleigh; "yet, trust me, she has an excellent heart. To tell you the truth, should she continue her extreme aversion to the cloister, and to her destined husband, and should my own labours in the mine of Plutus promise to secure me a decent independence, I shall think of renewing our acquaintance, and sharing it with Miss Vernon."

With all his fine voice, and well-turned periods, thought I, this same Rashleigh Osbaldistone is the ugliest and most conceited coxcomb I ever met with.

"But," continued Rashleigh, as if thinking aloud, "I should not like to supplant Thorncliff."

"Supplant Thorncliff! — Is your brother Thorncliff," I enquired, with great surprise, "the destined husband of Diana Vernon?"

"Why, ay; her father's commands, and a certain family-contract, destine her to marry one of Sir Hildebrand's sons. A dispensation has been obtained from Rome to Diana Vernon to marry *Blank* Osbaldistone, Esq., son of Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone, of Osbaldistone-Hall, Bart., and so forth; and it only remains to pitch upon the happy man, whose name shall fill the gap in the manuscript. Now as Percie is seldom sober,

my father pitched on Thorncliff, as the second prop of the family, and therefore most proper to carry on the line of the Osbaldistones."

"The young lady," said I, forcing myself to assume an air of pleasantry, which, I believe, became me extremely ill, "would perhaps, have been inclined to look a little lower on the family-tree, for the branch to which she was desirous of clinging."

"I cannot say," he replied. "There is room for little choice in our family; Dick is a gambler, John a boor, and Wilfred an ass. I believe my father really made the best selection for poor Die, after all."

"The present company," said I, "being always excepted."

"O, my destination to the church placed me out of the question; otherwise I will not affect to say, that, qualified by my education both to instruct and guide Miss Vernon, I might have been a more creditable choice than any of my elders."

"And so thought the young lady, doubtless?"

"You are not to suppose so," answered Rashleigh, with an affectation of denial, which was contrived to convey the strongest affirmation the case admitted of — "friendship — only friendship — formed the tie betwixt us, and the tender affection of an

opening mind to its only instructor — Love came not near us — I told you I was wise in time.”

I felt little inclination to pursue this conversation any farther, and, shaking myself clear of Rashleigh, withdrew to my own apartment, which I recollect I traversed with much vehemence of agitation; repeating aloud the expressions which had most offended me. “Susceptible — ardent — tender affection — Love! — Diana Vernon, the most beautiful creature I ever beheld, in love with him, the bandy-legged, bull-necked, limping scoundrel! — Richard the Third in all but his hump-back! — And yet the opportunities he must have had during his cursed course of lectures; and the fellow’s flowing and easy strain of sentiment; and her extreme seclusion from every one who spoke and acted with common sense; ay, and her obvious pique at him, mixed with admiration of his talents, which looked as like the result of neglected attachment as any thing else — Well, and what is it to me that I should storm and rage at it? Is Diana Vernon the first pretty girl that has loved or married an ugly fellow? And if she were free of every Osbaldistone of shem, what concern is it of mine? — A catholic — a jacobite — a termagant into the boot — for me to look that way were utter madness.”

By throwing such reflections on the flame of my displeasure, I subdued it into a sort of smouldering heart-burning, and appeared at the dinner-table in as sulky a humour as could well be imagined.

CHAPTER XII

 CHAPTER XII.

*„Drunk? — and speak parrot? — and squabble?
 — swagger? —
 Swear? — and discourse fustian with one's
 own shadow?”*

OTHELLO.

I HAVE already told you, my dear Tresham, which probably was no news to you, that my principal fault was an unconquerable pitch of pride, which exposed me to frequent mortification. I had not even whispered to myself, that I loved Diana Vernon; yet no sooner did I hear Rashleigh talk of her as a prize which he might stoop to carry off, or neglect at his pleasure, than every step which the poor girl had taken, in the innocence and openness of her heart, to form a sort of friendship with me, seemed in my eyes the most insulting coquetry. „Soh! she would secure me as a *pis aller*, I suppose, in

case Mr Rashleigh Osbaldistone should not take compassion upon her! but I will satisfy her that I am not a person to be trepanned in that manner — I will make her sensible that I see through her arts, and that I scorn them.”

I did not reflect for a moment, that all this indignation, which I had no right whatsoever to entertain, proved that I was any thing but indifferent to Miss Vernon's charms, and I sate down to table in high ill-humour with her and all the daughters of Eve.

Miss Vernon heard me, with surprise, return ungracious answers to one or two playful strokes of satire which she threw out with her usual freedom of speech; but, having no suspicion that offence was meant, she only replied to my rude repartees with jests somewhat similar, but polished by her good temper, though pointed by her wit. At length she perceived I was really out of humour, and answered one of my rude speeches, — “They say, Mr Frank, that one may gather sense from fools — I heard cousin Wilfred refuse to play any longer at cudgels the other day with cousin Thornie, because cousin Thornie got angry, and struck harder than the rules of amicable combat, it seems, permitted. ‘Were I to break your head in good earnest,’ quoth honest Wilfred, ‘I care not how angry you are, for I should do it so much the more

easily; — but it's hard I should get raps over the costard, and only pay you back in make-believes' — Do you understand the moral of this, Frank?"

"I have never felt myself under the necessity, madam, of studying how to extract the slender portion of sense with which this family season their conversation."

"Necessity! and madam! — you surprise me, Mr Osbaldistone."

"I am unfortunate in doing so."

"Am I to suppose that this capricious tone is serious; or is it only assumed to make your good-humour more valuable?"

"You have a right to the attention of so many gentlemen in this family, Miss Vernon, that it cannot be worth your while to enquire into the cause of my stupidity and bad spirits."

"What! am I to understand, then, you have deserted my faction, and gone over to the enemy?"

Then, looking across the table, and observing that Rashleigh, who was seated opposite, was watching us with a singular expression of interest on his harsh features, she continued,

"Horrible thought! — Ay, now I see 'tis true, For the grim-visaged Rashleigh smiles on me, And points at thee for his —

“Well, thank Heaven, and the unprotected state which has taught me endurance, I do not take offence easily; and that I may not be forced to quarrel, whether I like it or no, I have the honour, earlier than usual, to wish you a happy digestion of your dinner and your bad humour.”

And she left the table accordingly.

Upon Miss Vernon's departure, I found myself very little satisfied with my own conduct. I had hurled back offered kindness, of which circumstances had but lately pointed out the honest sincerity, and I had but just stopped short of insulting the beautiful, and, as she had said with some emphasis, the unprotected being by whom it was proffered. My conduct seemed brutal in my own eyes. To combat or drown these painful reflections, I applied myself more frequently than usual to the wine which circulated on the table.

The agitated state of my feelings combined with my habits of temperance to give rapid effect to the beverage. Habitual toppers, I believe, acquire the power of soaking themselves with a quantity of liquor which does little more than muddy those intellects, that, in their sober state, are none of the clearest; but men who are strangers to the vice of drunkenness as a habit, are more powerfully acted upon by into-

xicating liquors. My spirits, once aroused, became extravagant; I talked a great deal, argued upon what I knew nothing of, told stories of which I forgot the point, then laughed immoderately at my own forgetfulness; I accepted several bets without having the least judgment; I challenged the giant John to wrestle with me, although he had kept the ring at Hexham for a year, and I never tried so much as a single fall.

My uncle had the goodness to interpose and prevent this consummation of drunken folly, which, I suppose, would have otherwise ended in my neck being broken.

It has even been reported by my maligners, that I sung a song while under this vinous influence; but, as I remember nothing of it, and never attempted to turn a tune in all my life before or since, I would willingly hope there is no foundation for the calumny. I was absurd enough without this exaggeration. Without positively losing my senses, I speedily lost all command of my temper, and my impetuous passions, whirled me onward at their pleasure. I had sate down sulky and discontented, and disposed to be silent — the wine rendered me loquacious, disputacious, and quarrelsome. I contradicted whatever was asserted, and attacked, without any respect to my uncle's table, both his politics and his religion. The affected moderation

of Rashleigh, which he well knew how to qualify with irritating ingredients, was even more provoking to me than the noisy and bullying language of his obstreperous brothers. My uncle, to do him justice, endeavoured to bring us to order, but his authority was lost amidst the tumult of wine and passion. At length, frantic at some real, or supposed injurious insinuation, I actually struck Rashleigh with my fist. No stoic philosopher, superior to his own passion and that of others, could have received an insult with a higher degree of scorn. What he himself did not think it apparently worth while to resent, Thorncliff resented for him. Swords were drawn, and we exchanged one or two passes, when the other brothers separated us by main force; and I shall never forget the diabolical sneer which writhed Rashleigh's wayward features, as I was forced from the apartment by the main strength of two of these youthful Titans. They secured me in my apartment by locking the door, and I heard them, to my inexpressible rage, laugh heartily as they descended the stairs. I essayed in my fury to break out; but the window-grates, and the strength of a door clenched with iron, resisted my efforts. At length I threw myself on my bed, and fell asleep amidst vows of dire revenge to be taken on the ensuing day.

But with the morning cool repentance came.

I felt, in the keenest manner, the violence and absurdity of my own conduct, and was obliged to confess that wine and passion had lowered my intellects even below those of Wilfred Osbaldistone, whom I held in so much contempt. My uncomfortable reflections were by no means soothed by meditating the necessity of an apology for my improper behaviour, and recollecting that Miss Vernon must be a witness of my submission. The impropriety and unkindness of my conduct to her personally, added not a little to these galling considerations, and for this I could not even plead the miserable excuse of intoxication.

Under all these aggravated feelings of shame and degradation, I descended to the breakfast-hall, like a criminal to receive sentence. It chanced that a hard frost had rendered it impossible to take out the hounds, so that I had the additional mortification to meet the family, excepting only Rashleigh and Miss Vernon, in full divan, surrounding the cold venison-pasty and chine of beef. They were in high glee as I entered, and I could easily imagine that the jests were furnished at my expense. In fact, what I was disposed to consider with serious pain, was regarded as an excellent good joke by my uncle, and the greater part of my cousins. Sir Hildebrand, while he rallied me on the exploits of

the preceding evening, swore he thought a young fellow had better be thrice drunk in one day, than sneak sober to bed like a presbyterian, and leave a batch of honest fellows, and a double quart of claret. And to back this consolatory speech, he poured out a large bumper of brandy, exhorting me to swallow a hair of the dog that had bit me.

“Never mind these lads laughing, nevoy,” he continued; “they would have been all as great milk-sops as yourself, had I not nursed them, as one may say, on the toast and tankard.”

Ill-nature was not the fault of my cousins in general; they saw I was vexed and hurt at the recollections of the preceding evening, and endeavoured, with clumsy kindness, to remove the painful impression they had made on me. Thorn-cliff alone looked sullen and unreconciled. This young man had never liked me from the beginning; and in the marks of attention occasionally shewn me by his brothers, awkward as they were, he alone had never joined. If it was true, of which, however, I began to have my doubts, that he was considered by the family, or regarded himself, as the destined husband of Miss Vernon, a sentiment of jealousy might have sprung up in his mind from the marked predilection which it was that young lady’s plea-

sure to shew for one, whom Thorncliff might, perhaps, think likely to become a dangerous rival.

Rashleigh at last entered, his visage as dark as mourning weed, brooding, I could not but doubt, over the unjustifiable and disgraceful insult I had offered to him. I had already settled in my own mind how I was to behave on the occasion, and had schooled myself to believe, that true honour consisted not in defending, but in apologizing for, an injury so much disproportioned to any provocation I might have to allege.

I therefore hastened to meet Rashleigh, and to express myself in the highest degree sorry for the violence with which I had acted on the preceding evening.

“No circumstances,” I said, “could have wrung from me a single word of apology, save my own consciousness of the impropriety of my behaviour. I hoped my cousin would accept of my regrets so sincerely offered, and consider how much of my misconduct was owing to the excessive hospitality of Osbaldistone-Hall.”

“He shall be friends with thee, lad,” cried the honest knight, in the full effusion of his heart; “or d — n me, if I call him son more. Why, Rashie, dost stand there like a log? *Sorry for it* is all a gentleman can say, if he happens to do any thing awry, especially over his claret. —

I served in Hounslow, and should know something, I think, of affairs of honour. Let me hear no more of this, and we'll go in a body and rummage out the badger in Birkenwood-bank."

Rashleigh's face resembled, as I have already noticed, no other countenance that I ever saw. But this singularity lay not only in the features, but in the mode of changing their expression. Other countenances, in altering from grief to joy, or from anger to satisfaction, pass through some brief interval, ere the expression of the predominant passion supersedes entirely that of its predecessor. There is a sort of twilight, like that between the clearing up of the darkness and the rising of the sun, while the swollen muscles subside, the dark eye clears, the forehead relaxes and expands itself, and the whole countenance loses its sterner shades, and becomes serene and placid. Rashleigh's face exhibited none of these gradations, but changed almost instantaneously from the expression of one passion to that of the contrary. I can compare it to nothing but the sudden shifting of a scene in the theatre, where, at the whistle of the prompter, a cavern disappears and a grove arises.

My attention was strongly arrested by this peculiarity on the present occasion. At Rashleigh's first entrance, "black he stood as night!"

With the same inflexible countenance he heard my excuse and his father's exhortation; and it was not until Sir Hildebrand had done speaking, when the cloud cleared away at once, and he expressed, in the kindest and most civil terms, his perfect satisfaction with the very handsome apology I had offered.

"Indeed," he said, "I have so poor a brain myself, when I impose on it the least burthen beyond my usual three glasses, that I have only, like honest Cassio, a very vague recollection of the confusion of last night — remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly — a quarrel, but nothing wherefore — So, my dear cousin," he continued, shaking me kindly by the hand, "conceive how much I am relieved, by finding that I have to receive an apology, instead of having to make one — I will not have a word said upon the subject more; I should be very foolish to institute any scrutiny into an account, when the balance, which I expected to be against me, has been so unexpectedly and agreeably struck in my favour. You see, Mr Osbaldistone, I am practising the language of Lombard Street, and qualifying myself for my new calling."

As I was about to answer, and raised my eyes for the purpose, they encountered those of Miss Vernon, who, having entered the room unob-

served during the conversation, had given it her close attention. Abashed and confounded, I fixed my eyes on the ground, and made my escape to the breakfast-table, where I herded among my busy cousins.

My uncle, that the events of the preceding day might not pass out of our memory without a practical moral lesson, took occasion to give Rashleigh and me his serious advice to correct our milksop habits, as he termed them, and gradually to enure our brains to bear a gentleman-like quantity of liquor, without brawls or breaking of heads. He recommended that we should begin piddling with a regular quart of claret per day, which, with the aid of March beer and brandy, made a handsome competence for a beginner in the art of toping. And for our encouragement, he assured us that he had known many a man who had lived to our years without having drank a pint of wine at a sitting, who yet, by falling into honest company, and following hearty example, had afterwards been numbered among the best good fellows of the time, and could carry off their six bottles under their belt quietly and comfortably, without brawling or babbling, and be neither sick nor sorry the next morning.

Sage as this advice was, and comfortable as was the prospect it held out to me, I profited

but little by the exhortation; partly, perhaps, because, as often as I raised my eyes from the table, I observed Miss Vernon's looks fixed on me, in which I thought I could read grave compassion blended with regret and displeasure. I began to consider how I should seek a scene of explanation and apology with her also, when she gave me to understand she was determined to save me the trouble of soliciting an interview. "Cousin Francis," she said, addressing me by the same title she used to give to the other Osbaldistones, although I had, properly speaking, no title to be called her kinsman, "I have encountered this morning a difficult passage in the *Divina Comedia* of Dante; will you have the goodness to step to the library and give me your assistance? and when you have unearthed for me the meaning of the obscure Florentine, we will join the rest at Birkenwood-bank, and see their luck at unearthing the badger."

I signified, of course, my readiness to wait upon her. Rashleigh made an offer to accompany us. "I am something better skilled," he said, "at tracking the sense of Dante through the metaphors and elisions of his wild and gloomy poem, than at hunting the poor inoffensive hermit yonder out of his cave."

"Pardon me, Rashleigh," said Miss Vernon; "but as you are to occupy Mr Francis's place in

the counting-house, you must surrender to him the charge of your pupil's education at Osbaldistone-Hall. We shall call you in, however, if there is any occasion, so pray do not look so grave upon it. Besides, it is a shame to you not to understand field-sports — What will you do should our uncle in Crane Alley ask you the signs by which you track a badger?"

"Ay, true, Die — true," said Sir Hildebrand with a sigh. "I misdoubt Rashleigh will be found short at the leap when he is put to the trial. An he would ha learned useful knowledge like his brothers, he was bred up where it grew, I wuss; but French antics, and book-learning, with the new turnips, and the rats, and the Hannoverians, ha changed the world that I ha known in Old England — But come along with us, Rashie, and carry my hunting-staff, man; thy cousin lacks none of thy company as now, and I wonna ha Die crossed — It's neer be said there was but one woman in Osbaldistone-Hall, and she died for lack of her will."

Rashleigh followed his father, as he commanded, not, however, ere he had whispered to Diana, "I suppose I must in discretion bring the courtier, Ceremony, in my company, and knock when I approach the door of the library?"

"No. no, Rashleigh," said Miss Vernon; "dismiss from your company the false archimage

Dissimulation, and it will better insure you free access to our classical consultations."

So saying, she led the way to the library, and I followed, — like a criminal I was going to say to execution; but, as I bethink me, I have used the simile once, if not twice before. Without any simile at all then, I followed, with a sense of awkward and conscious embarrassment, which I would have given a great deal to shake off. I thought it a degrading and unworthy feeling to attend one upon such an occasion, having breathed the air of the continent long enough to have imbibed the notion that lightness, gallantry, and something approaching to well-bred self-assurance, should distinguish the gentleman whom a fair lady selects for her companion in a tête-à-tête.

My English feelings, however, were too many for my French education, and I made, I believe, a very pitiful figure, when Miss Vernon, seating herself majestically in a huge elbow-chair in the library, like a judge about to hear a cause of importance, signed to me to take a chair opposite to her, (which I did, much like the poor fellow who is going to be tried) and entered upon conversation in a tone of bitter irony.

CHAPTER XIII.

*Dire was his thought, who first in poison steep'd
The weapon formed for slaughter — direr his,
And worthier of damnation, who instill'd
The mortal venom in the social cup,
To fill the veins with death instead of life.*

Anonymous.

“UPON my word, Mr Francis Osbaldistone,” said Miss Vernon, with the air of one who thought herself fully entitled to assume the privilege of ironical reproach, which she was pleased to exert, “your character improves upon us sir — I could not have thought that it was in you. — Yesterday might be considered as your assay-piece, to prove yourself entitled to be free of the corporation of Osbaldistone-Hall. But it was a master-piece.”

“I am quite sensible of my ill-breeding, Miss Vernon, and I can only say for myself, that I had received some communications by which my spirits were unusually agitated. I am conscious I was impertinent and absurd.”

“You do yourself great injustice,” said the merciless monitor — “you have contrived, by what I saw and have since heard, to exhibit in the course of one evening a happy display of all the various masterly qualifications which distinguish your several cousins; — the gentle and generous temper of the benevolent Rashleigh, — the temperance of Percie, — the cool courage of Thorncliff, — John’s skill in dog-breaking, — Dickon’s aptitude to betting, — all exhibited by the single individual Mr Francis, and that with a selection of time, place, and circumstance, worthy the taste and sagacity of the sapient Wilfred.”

“Have a little mercy, Miss Vernon,” said I; for I confess I thought the schooling as severe as the case merited, especially considering from what quarter it came, “and forgive me if I suggest, as an excuse for follies I am not usually guilty of, the custom of this house and country. I am far from approving it; but we have Shakspeare’s authority for saying, that good wine is a good familiar creature, and that any man living may be overtaken at some time.”

“Ay, Mr Francis, but he places the panegyric and the apology in the mouth of the greatest villain his pencil has drawn. I will not, however, abuse the advantage your quotation has given me, by overwhelming you with the refutation with which the victim Cassio replies to the tempter Iago. I only wish you to know, that there is one person at least sorry to see a youth of talents and expectations sink into the slough in which the inhabitants of this house are nightly wallowing.”

“I have but wet my shoe, I assure you, Miss Vernon, and am too sensible of the filth of the puddle to step farther in.”

“If such be your resolution,” she replied, “it is a wise one. But I was so much vexed at what I heard, that your concerns have pressed before my own. — You behaved to me yesterday, during dinner, as if something had been told you which lessened or lowered me in your opinion — I beg leave to ask you what it was?”

I was stupified — the direct bluntness of the demand was much in the style one gentleman uses to another, when requesting explanation of any part of his conduct in a good-humoured yet determined manner, and was totally devoid of the circumlocutions, shadings, softenings, and periphrasis, which usually accompany explana-

tions betwixt persons of different sexes in the higher orders of society.

I remained completely embarrassed; for it pressed on my recollection, that Rashleigh's communications, supposing them to be correct, ought to have rendered Miss Vernon rather an object of my compassion, than of my pettish resentment; and had they furnished the best apology possible for my own conduct, still I must have had the utmost difficulty in detailing what inferred such necessary and natural offence to Miss Vernon's feelings. She observed my hesitation, and proceeded in a tone somewhat more peremptory, but still temperate and civil.

“I hope Mr Osbaldistone does not dispute my title to request this explanation. I have no relative who can protect me; it is, therefore, just that I be permitted to protect myself.”

I endeavoured with hesitation to throw the blame of my rude behaviour upon indisposition — upon disagreeable letters from London. She suffered me to exhaust my apologies, and fairly to run myself aground, listening all the while with a smile of absolute incredulity.

“And now, Mr Francis, having gone through your prologue of excuses, with the same bad grace with which all prologues are delivered, please to draw the curtain, and shew me that which I desire to see. In a word, let me know

what Rashleigh says of me; for he is the grand engineer and first mover of all the machinery of Osbaldistone-Hall.

«But, supposing there was any thing to tell, Miss Vernon, what does he deserve that betrays the secrets of one ally to another? — Rashleigh, you yourself told me, remained your ally, though no longer your friend.”

«I have neither patience for evasion, nor inclination for jesting, on the present subject. Rashleigh cannot — ought not — dare not, hold any language respecting me, Diana Vernon, but what I may demand to hear repeated. That there are subjects of secrecy and confidence between us, is most certain; but to such, his communications to you could have no relation; and with such, I, as an individual, have no concern.”

I had by this time recovered my presence of mind, and hastily determined to avoid making any disclosure of what Rashleigh had told me in a sort of confidence. There was something unworthy in retailing private conversation; it could, I thought, do no good, and must necessarily give Miss Vernon great pain. I therefore replied, gravely, «that nothing but frivolous talk had passed between Mr Rashleigh Osbaldistone and me on the state of the family at the Hall; and I protested, that nothing had been said

which left a serious impression to her disadvantage. As a gentleman, I said, I could not be more explicit in reporting private conversation."

She started up with the animation of a Camilla about to advance into battle. "This shall not serve your turn, sir — I must have another answer from you." Her features kindled — her brow became flushed — her eye glanced wild-fire as she proceeded. "I demand such an explanation, as a woman basely slandered has a right to demand from every man who calls himself a gentleman — as a creature, motherless, friendless, alone in the world, left to her own guidance and protection, has a right to require from every being having a happier lot, in the name of that God who sent *them* into the world to enjoy, and *her* to suffer. You shall not deny me — or," she added, looking solemnly upwards, "you will rue your denial, if there is justice for wrong either on earth or in Heaven."

I was utterly astonished at her vehemence, but felt, thus conjured, that it became my duty to lay aside scrupulous delicacy, and gave her briefly, but distinctly, the heads of the information which Rashleigh had conveyed to me.

She sate down and resumed her composure, as soon as I entered upon the subject, and when I stopped to seek for the most delicate turn of

expression, she repeatedly interrupted me, with "Go on — pray, go on; the first word which occurs to you is the plainest, and must be the best. Do not think of my feelings, but speak as you would to an unconcerned third party."

Thus urged and encouraged, I stammered through all the account which Rashleigh had given of her early contract to marry an Osbaldistone, and of the uncertainty and difficulty of her choice; and there I would willingly have paused. But her penetration discovered that there was still something behind, and even guessed to what it related.

"Well, it was ill-natured of Rashleigh to tell this tale on me. I am like the poor girl, in the Fairy Tale, who was betrothed in her cradle to the Black Bear of Norway, but complained chiefly of being called Bruin's bride by her companions at school. But besides all this, Rashleigh said something of himself with relation to me — Did he not?"

"He certainly hinted, that were it not for the idea of supplanting his brother, he would now, in consequence of his change of profession, be desirous that the word Rashleigh should fill up the blank in the dispensation, instead of the word Thorncliff."

"Ay? indeed?" she replied; "was he so very condescending? — Too much honour for his

humble hand-maid, Diana Vernon — And she, I suppose, was to be enraptured with joy could such a substitute be effected?"

"To confess the truth, he intimated as much; and even farther insinuated" —

"What? — Let me hear it all!" she exclaimed hastily.

"That he had broken off your mutual intimacy, lest it should have given rise to an affection by which his destination to the church would not permit him to profit."

"I am obliged to him for his consideration," replied Miss Vernon, every feature of her fine countenance taxed to express the most supreme degree of scorn and contempt. She paused a moment, and then said, with her usual composure, "There is but little I have heard from you which I did not expect to hear, and which I ought not to have expected; because, bating one circumstance, it is all very true. But as there are some poisons so active, that a few drops, it is said, will infect a whole fountain, so there is one falsehood in Rashleigh's communication, powerful enough to corrupt the whole well in which Truth herself is said to have dwelt. It is the leading and foul falsehood, that, knowing Rashleigh as I have reason too well to know him, any circumstance on earth could make me think of sharing my lot with him. No," she con-

tinued, with a sort of inward shuddering that seemed to express involuntary horror; "any lot rather than that — the sot, the gambler, the bully, the jockey, the insensate fool, were a thousand times preferable to Rashleigh; — the convent — the jail — the grave, shall be welcome before them all."

There was a sad and melancholy cadence in her voice, corresponding with the strange and interesting romance of her situation. So young, so beautiful, so untaught, so much abandoned to herself, and deprived of all the support which her sex derives from the countenance and protection of female friends, and even of that degree of defence which arises from the forms with which the sex are approached in civilized life, — it is scarce metaphorical to say, that my heart bled for her. Yet there was an expression of dignity in her contempt of ceremony — of upright feeling in her disdain of falsehood — of firm resolution in the manner in which she contemplated the dangers by which she was surrounded, which blended my pity with the warmest admiration. She seemed a princess deserted by her subjects, and deprived of her power, yet still scorning those formal regulations of society which are created for persons of an inferior rank; and, amid her difficulties, relying boldly and confidently on the justice of

Heaven, and the unshaken constancy of her own mind.

I offered to express the mingled feelings of sympathy and admiration with which her unfortunate situation and her high spirit combined to impress me, but she imposed silence upon me at once.

“I told you in jest,” she said, “that I disliked compliments — I now tell you in earnest, that I do not ask sympathy, and that I despise consolation. What I have borne I have borne — What I am to bear, I will sustain as I may; no word of commiseration can make a burthen feel one feather’s weight lighter to the slave who must carry it. There is only one human being who could have assisted me, and that is he who has rather chosen to add to my embarrassment — Rashleigh Osbaldistone. — Yes! the time once was that I might have learned to love that man — But, great God! the purpose for which he insinuated himself into the confidence of one already so forlorn — the undeviating and continued assiduity with which he pursued that purpose from year to year, without one single momentary pause of remorse or compassion — the purpose to which he would have converted into poison the food he administered to my mind — Gracious Providence! what should I have been in this world and the next, in body and soul,

had I fallen under the arts of this accomplished villain!"

I was so much struck with the scene of perfidious treachery which these words disclosed, that I rose from my chair, hardly knowing what I did, laid my hand on the hilt of my sword, and was about to leave the apartment in search of him on whom I might discharge my just indignation. Almost breathless, and with eyes and looks in which scorn and indignation had given way to the most lively alarm, Miss Vernon threw herself between me and the door of the apartment.

"Stay," she said, — "stay; however just your resentment, you do not know half the secrets of this fearful prison-house." She then glanced her eyes anxiously round the room, and sunk her voice almost to a whisper — "He bears a charmed life; you cannot assail him without endangering other lives, and wider destruction. Had it been otherwise, in some hour of justice he had hardly been safe even from this weak hand. I told you," she said, motioning me back to my seat, "that I needed no comforter — I now tell you, I need no avenger."

I resumed my seat, mechanically musing on what she said, and recollecting also what had escaped me in my first glow of resentment, that I had no title whatever to constitute myself Miss

Vernon's champion. She paused to let her own emotions and mine subside, and then addressed me with more composure.

«I have already said, that there is a mystery connected with Rashleigh, of a dangerous and fatal nature. Villain as he is, and as he knows he stands convicted in my eyes, I cannot — dare not, openly break with or defy him. You also, Mr Osbaldistone, must bear with him with patience, foil his artifices by opposing to them prudence, not violence, and, above all, you must avoid such scenes as that of last night, which cannot but give him perilous advantages over you. This caution I designed to give you, and it was the object with which I desired this interview; but I have extended my confidence farther than I designed.”

I assured her it was not misplaced.

«I do not believe that it is,” she replied. «You have that in your face and manners which authorizes trust. Let us continue to be friends. You need not fear,” she said, laughing, while she blushed a little, yet speaking with a free and unembarrassed voice, «that friendship with us should prove only a specious name, as the poet says, for another feeling. I belong, in habits of thinking and acting, rather to your sex, with which I have always been brought up, than to my own. Besides, the fatal veil was wrapt

round me in my cradle; for you may easily believe I have never thought of the detestable condition under which I may remove it. The time," she added, "for expressing my final determination is not arrived, and I would fain have the freedom of wild heath and open air with the other commoners of nature, as long as I can be permitted to enjoy them. And now that the passage in Dante is made so clear, pray, go and see what is become of the badger-baiters. My head aches so much that I cannot join the party."

I left the library, but not to join the hunters. I felt that a solitary walk was necessary to compose my spirits, before I again trusted myself in Rashleigh's company, whose depth of calculating villainy had been so strikingly exposed to me. In Dubourg's family, (as he was of the reformed persuasion), I had heard many a tale of Romish priests, who gratified, at the expense of friendship, hospitality, and the most sacred ties of social life, those passions, the blameless indulgence of which is denied by the rules of their order. But the deliberate system of undertaking the education of a deserted orphan of noble birth, and so intimately allied to his own family, with the perfidious purpose of ultimately seducing her, detailed as it was by the intended victim with all the glow of virtuous resentment, seemed more atrocious to me than the worst of

the tales I had heard at Bourdeaux, and I felt it would be extremely difficult for me to meet Rashleigh, and yet to suppress the abhorrence with which he inspired me. Yet this was absolutely necessary, not only on account of the mysterious charge which Diana had given me, but because I had, in reality, no ostensible ground for quarrelling with him.

I therefore resolved, as far as possible, to meet Rashleigh's dissimulation with equal caution on my part during our residence in the same family; and when he should depart for London, I resolved to give Owen, at least, such a hint of his character as might keep him on his guard over my father's interests. Avarice or ambition, I thought, might have as great, or greater charms for a mind constituted like Rashleigh's, than unlawful pleasure; the energy of his character, and his power of assuming all seeming good qualities, were likely to procure him a high degree of confidence, and it was not to be hoped, that either good faith or gratitude would prevent him from abusing it. The task was somewhat difficult, especially in my circumstances, since the caution which I threw out might be imputed to jealousy of my rival, or rather my successor in my father's favour. Yet I thought it absolutely necessary to frame such a letter, leaving it to Owen, who, in his own line, was wary, prudent, and circum-

spect, to make the necessary use of his knowledge of Rashleigh's true character. Such a letter, therefore, I indited and dispatched to the post-house by the first opportunity.

At my meeting with Rashleigh, he, as well as I, appeared to have taken up distant ground, and to be disposed to avoid all pretext for collision. He was probably conscious that Miss Vernon's communications had been unfavourable to him, though he could not know that they extended to discovering his meditated villainy towards her. Our intercourse, therefore, was reserved on both sides, and turned on subjects of little interest. Indeed, his stay at Osbaldistone-Hall did not exceed a few days after this period, during which I only remarked two circumstances respecting him. The first was, the rapid and almost intuitive manner in which his powerful and active mind seized upon and arranged the elementary principles necessary in his new profession, which he now studied hard, and occasionally made parade of his progress, as if to shew me how light it was for him to lift the burthen which I had flung down from very weariness and inability to carry it. The other remarkable circumstance was, that, notwithstanding the injuries with which Miss Vernon charged Rashleigh, they had several private interviews together of considerable length, although their

bearing towards each other in public did not seem more cordial than usual.

When the day of Rashleigh's departure arrived, his father bade him farewell with indifference; his brothers, with the ill-concealed glee of school-boys, who see their task-master depart for a season, and feel a joy which they dare not express; and I myself with cold politeness. When he approached Miss Vernon, and would have saluted her, she drew back with a look of haughty disdain; but said, as she extended her hand to him, «Farewell, Rashleigh; God reward you for the good you have done, and forgive you for the evil you have meditated.»

«Amen, my fair cousin,» he replied with an air of sanctity, which belonged, I thought, to the seminary of Saint Omers; «happy is he whose good intentions have borne fruit in deeds, and whose evil thoughts have perished in the blossom.»

These were his parting words. «Accomplished hypocrite!» said Miss Vernon to me, as the door closed behind him — «how nearly can what we most despise and hate approach in outward manner to that which we most venerate!»

I had written to my father by Rashleigh, and also a few lines to Owen, besides the confi-

dential letter which I have already mentioned, and which I thought it more proper and prudent to dispatch by another conveyance. In these epistles, it would have been natural for me to have pointed out to my father and my friend, that I was at present in a situation where I could improve myself in no respect, unless in the mysteries of hunting and hawking; and where I was not unlikely to forget, in the company of rude grooms and horse-boys, any useful knowledge or elegant accomplishments which I had hitherto acquired. It would also have been natural that I should have expressed the disgust and tædium which I was likely to feel among beings, whose whole souls were centered in fieldsports or more degrading pastimes — that I should have complained of the habitual intemperance of the family in which I was a guest, and the difficulty and almost resentment with which my uncle Sir Hildebrand received any apology for deserting the bottle. This last, indeed, was a topic on which my father, himself a man of severe temperance, was likely to be easily alarmed, and to have touched upon this spring would to a certainty have opened the doors of my prison-house, and would either have been the means of abridging my exile, or at least would have procured me a change of residence during my rustication.

I say, my dear Tresham, that, considering how very unpleasant a prolonged residence at Osbaldistone-Hall must have been to a young man at my age, and with my habits, it might have seemed very natural that I should have pointed out all these disadvantages to my father, in order to obtain his consent for leaving my uncle's mansion. Nothing, however, is more certain, than that I did not say a single word to this purpose in my letters to my father and Owen. If Osbaldistone-Hall had been Athens in all its pristine glory of learning, and inhabited by sages, heroes, and poets, I could not have expressed less inclination to leave it.

If thou hast any of the salt of youth left in thee, Tresham, thou wilt be at no loss to account for my silence on a topic seemingly so obvious. Miss Vernon's extreme beauty, of which she herself seemed so little conscious, — her romantic and mysterious situation, — the evils to which she was exposed, — the courage with which she seemed to face them, — her manners, more frank than belonged to her sex, yet, as it seemed to me, exceeding in frankness only from the dauntless consciousness of her innocence, — above all, the obvious and flattering distinction which she made in my favour over all other persons, were at once calculated to interest my best feelings, to excite my curiosity,

awaken my imagination, and gratify my vanity. I dared not indeed to confess to myself the depth of the interest with which Miss Vernon inspired me, or the large share which she occupied in my thoughts. We read together, walked together, rode together, and sate together. The studies which she had broken off upon her quarrel with Rashleigh, she now resumed under the auspices of a tutor whose views were more sincere, though his capacity was far more limited.

In truth, I was by no means qualified to assist her in the prosecution of several profound studies which she had commenced with Rashleigh, and which appeared to me more fitted for a churchman than for a beautiful female. Neither can I conceive with what view he should have engaged Diana in the gloomy maze of the casuistry which schoolmen called philosophy, or in the equally abstruse, though more certain sciences of mathematics and astronomy; unless it were to break down and confound in her mind the difference and distinction between the sexes, and to habituate her to trains of subtle reasoning, by which he might at his own time invest that which was wrong with the colour of that which is right. It was in the same spirit, though in the latter case the evil purpose was more obvious, that the lessons of Rashleigh had encouraged Miss Vernon in setting at nought and despi-

sing the forms and ceremonial limits which are drawn round females in modern society. It is true she was sequestered from all female company, and could not learn the usual rules of decorum, either from example or precept. Yet such was her innate modesty, and accurate sense of what was right and wrong, that she would not of herself have adopted the bold uncompromising manner which struck me with so much surprise on our first acquaintance, had she not been led to conceive, that a contempt of ceremony indicated at once superiority of understanding, and the confidence of conscious innocence. Her wily instructor had, no doubt, his own views in levelling those outworks which reserve and caution erect around virtue. But for these, and for his other crimes, he has long since answered at a higher tribunal.

Besides the progress which Miss Vernon, whose powerful mind readily adopted every means of information offered to it, had made in more abstract science, I found her no contemptible linguist, and well acquainted both with ancient and modern literature. Were it not that strong talents will often go farthest when they seem to have least assistance, it would be almost incredible to tell the rapidity of Miss Vernon's progress in knowledge; and it was still more extraordinary, when her stock of mental acquisitions

from books was compared with her total ignorance of actual life. It seemed as if she saw and knew every thing, except what passed in the world around her; and I believe it was this very ignorance and simplicity of thinking upon ordinary subjects, so strikingly contrasted with her fund of general knowledge and information, which rendered her conversation so irresistibly fascinating, and rivetted the attention to whatever she said or did; since it was absolutely impossible to anticipate whether her next word or action was to display the most acute perception, or the most profound simplicity. The degree of danger which necessarily attended a youth of my age and keen feelings from remaining in close and constant intimacy with an object so amiable, and so peculiarly interesting, all who remember their own sentiments at my age may easily estimate.

CHAPTER XIV.

*Yon lamp its line of quivering light
Shoots from my lady's bower;
But why should Beauty's lamp be bright
At midnight's lonely hour?*

Old Ballad.

OUR mode of life at Osbaldistone-Hall was too uniform to admit of description. Diana Vernon and I enjoyed much of our time in our mutual studies; the rest of the family killed theirs in such sports and pastimes as suited the seasons, in which we also took our share. My uncle was a man of habits, and by habit became so much accustomed to my presence and mode of life, that, upon the whole, he was rather fond of me than otherwise. I might probably have risen yet higher in his good graces, had I employed the same arts for that purpose which were used by Rashleigh, who, availing himself

of his father's disinclination to business, had gradually insinuated himself into the management of his property. But although I readily gave my uncle the advantage of my pen and my arithmetic so often as he desired to correspond with a neighbour, or settle with a tenant, and was, in so far, a more useful inmate in his family than any of his sons, yet I was not willing to oblige Sir Hildebrand, by relieving him entirely from the management of his own affairs; so that, while the good knight admitted that nevoy Frank was a steady, handy lad, he seldom failed to remark in the same breath, that he did not think he should ha missed Rashleigh so much as he was like to do.

As it is particularly unpleasant to reside in a family where we are at variance with any part of it, I made some efforts to overcome the ill-will which my cousins entertained against me. I exchanged my laced hat for a jockey-cap, and made some progress in their opinion; I broke a young colt in a manner which carried me farther into their good graces. A bet or two opportunely lost to Dickon, and an extra health pledged with Percie, placed me on an easy and familiar footing with all the young squires except Thorncliff.

I have already noticed the dislike entertained against me by this young fellow, who, as he

had rather more sense, had also a much worse temper than any of his brethren. Sullen, dogged, and quarrelsome, he regarded my residence at Osbaldistone-Hall as an intrusion, and viewed, with envious and jealous eyes, my intimacy with Diana Vernon, whom the effect proposed to be given to a certain family-compact, assigned to him as an intended spouse. That he loved her could scarcely be said, at least without much misapplication of the word; but he regarded her as something appropriated to himself, and resented internally the interference which he knew not how to prevent or interrupt. I attempted a tone of conciliation towards Thorncliff on several occasions; but he rejected my advances with a manner about as gracious as that of a growling mastiff, when the animal shuns and resents a stranger's attempts to caress him. I therefore abandoned him to his ill-humour, and gave myself no further trouble about the matter.

Such was the footing upon which I stood with the family at Osbaldistone-Hall; but I ought to mention another of its inmates with whom I occasionally held some discourse. This was Andrew Fairservice, the gardener, who (since he had discovered that I was a protestant), rarely suffered me to pass him without proffering his Scotch mull for a social pinch. There were several advantages attending this courtesy. In

the first place, it was made at no expense, for I never used snuff; and, secondly, it afforded an excellent apology to Andrew (who was not particularly fond of hard labour) for laying aside his spade for several minutes. But, above all, these brief interviews gave Andrew an opportunity of venting the news he had collected, or the satirical remarks which his shrewd northern humour suggested.

“I am saying, sir,” he said to me one evening, with a face obviously charged with intelligence, “I hae been down at the Trinlay-knowe.”

“Well, Andrew, and I suppose you heard some news at the ale-house?”

“Na, sir; I never gang to the yill-house — that is, unless ony neighbour was to gie me a pint or the lika o’ that; but to gang there on ane’s ain coat-tail, is a waste o’ precious time and hard-won siller. — But I was down as the Trinlay-knowe, as I was saying, about a wee bit business o’ my ain wi’ Mattie Simpson, that wants a forpit or twa o’ peers, that will never be missed in the Ha’ house — and when we were at the thrangest o’ our bargain, wha suld come in but Pate Macready the travelling merchant.”

“Pedlar, I suppose you mean?”

“E’en as your honour likes to ca’ him; but it’s a creditable calling and a gainfu’, and has been lang in use wi’ our folk. — Pate’s a far-

awa cousin o' mine, and we were blithe to meet wi' ane another."

"And you went and had a jug of ale together, I suppose, Andrew? — For Heaven's sake, cut short your story."

"Bide a wee — bide a wee; you southernners are aye in sic a hurry, and this is something concerns yoursell, an ye wad tak patience to hear't — Yill? — deil a drap o' yill did Pate offer me; but Mattie gae us baith a drap skimmed milk, and one o' her thick ait jannocks, that was as wat and raw as a divot. — O for the bonnie girdle cakes o' the North! — and sae we sate doun and took out our clavers."

"I wish you would take them out just now. Pray, tell me the news, if you have got any worth telling, for I cant's stop here all night."

"Than, if ye maun hae't, the folk in Lunnun are a' clean wud about this bit job in the north here."

"Clean wood! what's that?"

"Ou, just real daft — neither to haud nor to bind — a' hirdy-girdy — clean through ither — the deil's ower Jock Webster."

"But what does all this mean? or what business have I with the deil or Jack Webster?"

"Umph!" said Andrew, looking extremely knowing, "it's just because — just that the dir-dum's a' about yon man's pockmanty."

“Whose portmanteau? or what do you mean?”

“Ou, just the man Morris’s, that he said he lost yonder; but if its no your honour’s affair, as little is it mine; and I maunna lose this gracious evening.”

And, as if suddenly seized with a violent fit of industry, Andrew began to labour most diligently.

My attention, as the crafty knave had foreseen, was now arrested, and unwilling, at the same time, to acknowledge any particular interest in that affair, by asking direct questions, I stood waiting till the spirit of voluntary communication should again prompt him to resume his story. Andrew dug on manfully, and spoke at intervals, but nothing to the purpose of Mr Macready’s news, and I stood and listened, cursing him in my heart, and desirous, at the same time, to see how long his humour of contradiction would prevail over his desire of speaking upon the subject, which was obviously uppermost in his mind.

“Am trenching up the sparry-grass, and am gaun to saw some Misegun beans; they winna want them to their swine’s flesh, I’s e warrant—muckle gude may it do them. And siclike dung as the grieve has gi’en me; it should be wheat-strae, or aiten at the warst o’t, and its pease-dirt, as fissenless as chuckie-stanes. But the huntsman guides a’ as he likes about the stable-

yard, and he's solded the best of the litter, I'se warrant. But howsomever, we mauna lose a turn o' this Saturday at e'en, for the wather's sair broken, and if there's a fair day in seven, Sunday's sure to come and lick it up — Howsomever, I'm no denying that it may settle, if it be Heaven's will, till Monday morning, and what's tke use o' my breaking my back at this rate — I think, I'll e'en awa' hame, for yon's the curfew, as they ca' their jowing-in bell."

Accordingly, applying both his hands to his spade, he pitched it upright in the trench which he had been digging, and looking at me with the air of superiority of one who knows himself possessed of important information, which he may communicate or refuse at his pleasure, pulled down the sleeves of his shirt, and walked slowly towards his coat, which lay carefully folded up upon a neighbouring garden-seat.

"I must pay the penalty for having interrupted the tiresome rascal," thought I to myself, "and even gratify Mr Fairservice by taking his communication on his own terms." Then raising my voice, I addressed him. "And after all, Andrew, what are these London news you had from your kinsman, the travelling merchant?"

"The pedlar, your honour means?" retorted Andrew — "but ca' him what ye wull, they're a great convenience in a country-side that's scant

o' borough-towns, like this Northumberland — That's no the case now, in Scotland — There's the kingdom o' Fife, frae Borrowstownness to the east nook, it's just like a great combined city — Sae mony royal boroughs yoked on end to end, like ropes of ingans, with their hiestreets, and their booths, nae doubt, and their cræmes, and houses of stane and lime and forestairs — Kirkaldy the sell o't is langer than ony town in England."

"I dare say it is all very splendid and very fine — but you were talking of the London news a little while ago, Andrew."

"Ay," replied Andrew; "but I didna think your honour cared to hear about them — howsoever," (he continued, grinning a ghastly smile,) Pate Macready does say, that they are sair mistrysted yonder in their Parliament-House about this rubbery o' Mr Morris, or whatever they ca' the chiel."

"In the House of Parliament, Andrew! How came they to mention it there?"

"Ou, that's just what I said to Pate; if it like your honour, I'll tell you the very words; its no worth making a lie for the matter — 'Pate,' said I, 'what ado had the lords and lairds and gentles at Lunnun wi' the carle and his walise? — When we had a Scots Parliament, Pate,' says I, (and deil rax their thrapples that rest us

o't,) 'they sate dousely down and made laws for a hale country and kinrick, and never fashed their beards about things that were competent to the judge ordinar o' the bounds; but I think,' said I, 'that if ae kail-wife pou'd aff her neighbour's mutch, they wad hae the twasome o' them into the Parliament-House o' Lunnun. It's just,' said I, 'amaist as silly as our auld daft laird here and his gomerils o' sons, wi' his huntsman and his hounds, and his hunting cattle and horns, riding hale days after a bit beast that winna weigh sax pund when they hae catched it.'

«You argued most admirably, Andrew," said I, willing to encourage him to get into the marrow of his intelligence; «and what said Pate?"

«Ou, he said, what better cou'd be expected of a wheen pock-pudding English folk? — But as to the rubbery, it's like that when they're a' at the thrang o' their Whig and Tory wark, and ca'ing ane anither like unhangd blackguards — up gets ae langtongued chield, and he says, that a' the north of England were rank jakobites, (and, quietly, he was na far wrang maybe) and that they had levied amaist open war, and a king's messenger had been stoppit and rubbit on the highway, and that the best bluid o' Northumberland had been at the doing o't — and mickle gowd ta'en aff him, and mony vaiuable

papers, and that there was nae redress to be gotten by remeed of law, for the first justice o' the peace that the rubbit man gaed to, he had fund the twa loons that did the deed birling and drinking wi' him, wha but they; and the justice took the word o' the tane for the compareance o' the tither; and that they e'en gae him leg-bail, and the honest man that had lost his siller, was fain to leave the country for fear waur had come of it."

"Can this be really true?" said I.

"Pate swears it's as true as that his elwand is a yard lang — (and so it is, just bating an inch, that it may meet the English measure) — And when the chield had said his warst, there was a terrible cry for names, and out brings he wi' this man Morris's name, and your uncle's, and Squire Inglewood's, and other folk's beside," (looking sly at me) — "And then another dragon o' a chield got up on the other side, and said, wad they accuse the best gentlemen in the land on the oath of a broken coward, for its like that Morris had been drummed out o' the army for rinning awa' in Flanders; and he said, it was like the story had been made up between the minister and him or ever he had left Lunnun; and that, if there was to be a search-warrant granted, he thought the siller wad be found some gait near to St James's Palace. Aweel,

they trailed up Morris to their bar, as they ca't, to see what he could say to the job, but the folk that were again him, gae him sic an awfu' through-gaun about his rinnin awa, and about a' the ill he had ever dune or said for a' the forepart o' his life, that Patie says, he looked mair like ane dead than living; and they cou'dna get a word o' sense out o' him, for downright fright at their gowling and routing. — He maun be a saft sap, wi' a head nae better than a fozy frosted turnip — it wad hae ta'en a hantle o' them to scaur Andrew Fairservice out o' his tale."

"And how did it all end, Andrew? did your friend happen to learn?"

"Ou, ay; for as his walk's in this country. Pate pat aff his journey for the space of a week or thereby, because it wad be acceptable to his customers to bring doun the news. It just a' gaed aff like moonshine in water. The fellow that began it drew in his horns and said, that though he believed the man had been rubbit, yet he acknowledged he might hae been mista'en about the particulars. And then the ither chield got up, and said, he cared na whether Morris was rubbit or no, provided it wasna to become a stain on ony gentleman's honour and reputation, especially in the north of England; for, said he before them, I come frae the north mysel,

and I carena a boddle wha kens it. And this is what they ca' explaining — the tane gies up a bit, and the tither gies up a bit, and a' friends again. Aweel, after the Commons' Parliamant had tuggit, and rived, and ruggit at Morris and his rubbery till they were tired o't, the Lords' Parliament they behoved to hae their spell o't. In puir auld Scotland's Parliament they a' sate thegither, cheek for choul, and than they did na need to hae the same blethers twice ower again. But till't their lordships gaed wi' as muckle teeth and gude will, as if the matter had been a' speck and span new. Forbye, there was something said about ane Campbell, that suld hae been concerned in the rubbery, mair or less, and that he suld hae had a warrant frae the Duke of Argyle, as a testimonial o' his character. And this put MacCallummore's beard in a bleize, as gude reason there was; and he gat up wi' an unco bang, and gar'd them a' look about them, and wad ram it even down their throats, there was never ane o' the Campbells but was as wight, wise, warlike, and worthy trust, as auld Sir John the Graeme. Now, if your honour's sure ye are na a drap's blude a-kin to a Campbell, as I am nane mysell, sae far as I can count my kin, or hae had it counted to me, I'll gie you my mind on that matter."

“You may be assured I have no connection whatever with any gentleman of the name.”

“Ou, than we may speak it quietly amang oursells. — There’s baith gude and bad o’ the Campbells, like other names. But this MacCallummore has an unco sway and say baith amang the grit folk at Lunnun just now; for he canna preceesely be said to belang to ony o’ the twa sides o’ them, sae deil ane o’ them likes to quarrel wi’ him; sae they e’en voted Morris’s tale a fause calumnious libel, as they ca’t, and if he hadna gi’en them leg-bail, he was likely to hae taen the air on the pillory for leasing-making.”

So speaking, honest Andrew collected his dibbles, spades, and hoes, and threw them into a wheel-barrow, leisurely, however, and allowing me full time to put any farther questions which might occur to me before he trundled them off to the tool-house, there to repose during the ensuing day. I thought it best to speak out at once, lest this meddling fellow should suppose there was more weighty reason for my silence than actually existed.

“I should like to see this countryman of yours, Andrew; and to hear his news from himself directly. You have probably heard that I had some trouble from the impertinent folly of this man Morris,” (Andrew grinned a most significant grin); “and I should wish to see your cousin

the merchant, to ask him the particulars of what he heard in London, if it could be done without much trouble."

"Naething mair easy," Andrew observed; "he had but to hint to his cousin that I wanted a pair or twa o' hose, and he wad be wi' me as fast as he could lay leg to the grund."

"O yes, assure him I shall be a customer; and as the night is, as you say, settled and fair, I shall walk in the garden until he comes; the moon will soon rise over the fells. You may bring him to the little back gate; and I shall have pleasure, in the meanwhile, in looking on the bushes and evergreens by the bright frosty moonlight."

"Vara right — vara right — that's what I hae aften said; a kail-blade, or a colliflour, glances sae glegly by moon-light, it's like a leddy in her diamonds."

So saying, off went Andrew Fairservice with great glee. He had to walk about two miles, a labour he undertook with the greatest pleasure, in order to secure his kinsman the sale of some articles of his trade, though it is probable he would not have not have given sixpence to treat him to a quart of ale. The good-will of an Englishman would have displayed itself in a manner exactly the reverse of Andrew's, thought I, as I paced along the smooth cut velvet walks,

which, embowered with high hedges of yew and of holly, intersected the ancient garden of Osbaldistone-Hall.

As I turned to retrace my steps, it was natural that I should lift up my eyes to the windows of the old library; which, small in size, but several in number, stretched along the second story of that side of the house which now faced me. Light glanced from their casements. I was not surprised at this, for I knew Miss Vernon often sate there of an evening, though from motives of delicacy I put a strong restraint upon myself, and never sought to join her at a time when I knew, all the rest of the family being engaged for the evening, our interviews must necessarily have been strictly *tête-à-tête*. In the mornings we usually read together in the same room; but then it often happened that one or other of our cousins entered to seek some parchment duodecimo that could be converted into a fishing-book, despite its gildings and illumination, or to tell us of some «sport toward,” or from mere want of knowing where else to dispose of themselves. In short, in the mornings the library was a sort of public-room, where man and woman might meet as on neutral ground. In the evening it was very different; and, bred in a country where much attention is paid, or was at least then paid, to *bienseance*, I was desirous to think for

Miss Vernon concerning those points of propriety where her experience did not afford her the means of thinking for herself. I made her therefore comprehend, as delicately as I could, what when we had evening lessons, the presence of a third party was proper.

Miss Vernon first laughed, then blushed, and was disposed to be displeased; and then, suddenly checking herself, said, «I believe you are very right; and when I feel inclined to be a very busy scholar, I will bribe old Martha with a cup of tea to sit by me and be my screen.”

Martha, the old housekeeper, partook of the taste of the family at the Hall. A toast and tankard would have pleased her better than all the tea in China. However, as the use of this beverage was then confined to the higher ranks, Martha felt some vanity in being asked to partake of it; and by dint of a great deal of sugar, many words scarce less sweet, and abundance of toast and butter, she was sometimes prevailed upon to give us her countenance. Upon other occasions, the servants almost unanimously shunned the library after night-fall, because it was their foolish pleasure to believe that it lay on the haunted side of the house. The more timorous had seen sights and heard sounds there when all the rest of the house was quiet; and even the young squires were far from having any wish to enter

these formidable precincts after nightfall without necessity.

That the library had at one time been a favourite resource of Rashleigh, — that a private door out of one side of it communicated with the sequestered and remote apartment which he chose for himself, rather increased than disarmed the terrors which the household had for the dreaded library of Osbaldistone-Hall. His extensive information as to what passed in the world, — his profound knowledge of science of every kind, — a few physical experiments which he occasionally shewed off, were, in a house of so much ignorance and bigotry, esteemed good reasons for supposing him endowed with powers over the spiritual world. He understood Greek, Latin, and Hebrew; and, therefore, according to the apprehension, an in the phrase, of his brother Wilfred, needed not to care “for ghaist or barghaist, devil or dobbie.” Yea, the servants persisted that they had heard him hold conversations in the library, when every versal soul in the family were gone to bed; and that he spent the night in watching for bogles, and the morning in sleeping in his bed, when he should have been heading the hounds like a true Osbaldistone.

All these absurd rumours I had heard in broken hints and imperfect sentences, from which I was

left to draw the inference; and, as easily may be supposed, I laughed them to scorn. But the extreme solitude to which this chamber of evil fame was committed every night after curfew time, was an additional reason why I should not intrude on Miss Vernon when she chose to sit there in an evening.

To resume what I was saying, I was not surprised to see a glimmering of light from the library windows; but I was a little struck when I distinctly perceived the shadow of two persons pass along and intercept the light from the first of the windows, throwing the casement for a moment into shade. It must be old Martha, thought I, whom Diana has engaged to be her companion for the evening, or I must have been mistaken, and taken Diana's shadow for a second person. No, by Heaven! it appears on the second window, — two figures distinctly traced; and now it is lost again — it is seen on the third — on the fourth — the darkened forms of two persons distinctly seen in each window as they pass along the room, betwixt the windows and the lights. Whom can Diana have got for a companion? — The passage of the shadows between the lights and the casements was twice repeated, as if to satisfy me that my observation served me truly; after which the lights were ex-

tinguished, and the shades, of course, were seen no more.

Trifling as this circumstance was, it occupied my mind for a considerable time. I did not allow myself to suppose, that my friendship for Miss Vernon had any directly selfish view; yet it is incredible the displeasure I felt at the idea of her admitting any one to private interviews at a time, and in a place, where, for her own sake, I had been at some trouble to shew her, that it was improper for me to meet with her.

“Silly, romping, incorrigible girl!” said I to myself, “on whom all good advice and delicacy are thrown away. I have been cheated by the simplicity of her manner, which I suppose she can assume just as she could a straw-bonnet, were it the fashion, for the mere sake of celebrity. I suppose, notwithstanding the excellence of her understanding, the society of half a dozen of clowns to play at whisk and swabbers would give her more pleasure than if Ariosto himself were to awake from the dead.”

This reflection came the more powerfully across my mind, because, having mustered up courage to shew to Diana my version of the first books of Ariosto, I had requested her to invite Martha to a teaparty in the library that evening, to which arrangement Miss Vernon had refused her consent, alleging some apology which I thought

frivolous at the time. I had not long speculated on this disagreeable subject, when the back garden-door opened, and the figures of Andrew and his countryman, bending under his pack, crossed the moonlight alley, and called my attention elsewhere.

I found Mr Macready, as I expected, a tough, sagacious, long-headed Scotchman, and a collector of news both from choice and profession. He was able to give me a distinct account of what had passed both in the House of Commons and House of Lords upon the affair of Morris, which, it appears, had been made by both parties a touchstone to ascertain the temper of the Parliament. It appeared also, that, as I had learned from Andrew by second hand, the ministry had proved too weak to support a story, involving the character of men of rank and importance, and resting upon the credit of a person of such indifferent fame as Morris, who was, moreover, confused and contradictory in his mode of telling the story. Macready was even able to supply me with a copy of a printed journal, or News-Letter, seldom extending beyond the capital, in which the substance of the debate was mentioned; and with a copy of the Duke of Argyle's speech, printed upon a broadside, of which he had purchased several from the hawkers, because, he said, it would be a saleable article on the

north of the Tweed. The first was a meagre statement, full of blanks and asterisks, and which added little or nothing to the information I had from the Scotchman; and the Duke's speech, though spirited and eloquent, contained chiefly a panegyric on his country, his family, and his clan, with a few compliments, equally sincere, perhaps, though less glowing, which he took so favourable an opportunity of paying to himself. I could not learn whether my own reputation had been directly implicated, although I perceived that the honour of my uncle's family had been impeached, and that this person Campbell, stated by Morris to have been the most active robber of the two by whom he was assailed, was said by him to have appeared in the behalf of a Mr Osbaldistone, and, by the connivance of the Justice, procured his liberation. In this particular, Morris's story jumped with my own suspicions, which had attached to Campbell from the moment I saw him appear at Justice Inglewood's. Vexed upon the whole, as well as perplexed with this extraordinary story, I dismissed the two Scotchmen, after making some purchases from Macready, and a small compliment to Fairservice, and retired to my own apartment to consider what I ought to do in defence of my character, thus publicly attacked.


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CHAPTER XV.

*Whence, and what art thou?*

MILTON.

**AFTER** exhausting a sleepless night in meditating on the intelligence I had received, I was at first inclined to think that I ought, as speedily as possible, to return to London, and by my open appearance to repel the calumny which had been spread against me. But I hesitated to take this course on recollection of my father's disposition, singularly absolute in his decisions as to all that concerned his family. He was most able certainly, from experience, to direct what I ought to do, and from his acquaintance with the most distinguished Whigs then in power, had the full capacity of obtaining a hearing for my cause. So, upon the whole, I judged it most safe to state my whole story in the shape of a narrative, addressed to my father; and as the ordinary op-



portunities of intercourse between the Hall and the post recurred rarely, I determined to ride over myself to the town, which was about ten miles distance, and deposit my letter in the post-office with my own hands.

Indeed I began to think it strange, that though several weeks had elapsed since my departure from home, I had received no letter, either from my father or Owen, although Rashleigh had written to Sir Hildebrand of his safe arrival in London, and of the kind reception he had met with from his uncle. Admitting that I might have been to blame, I did not deserve, in my own opinion at least, to be so totally forgotten by my father; and I thought my present excursion might have the effect of bringing a letter from him to hand more early than it would otherwise have reached me. But before concluding my letter concerning the affair of Morris, I failed not to express my earnest hope and wish that my father would honour me with a few lines, were it but to express his advice and commands in an affair of some difficulty, and where my knowledge of life could not be supposed adequate to my own guidance. I found it impossible to prevail on myself to urge my actual return to London as a place of residence, and I disguised my unwillingness to do so under apparent submission to my father's will, as which, I imposed it on myself as a sufficient reason



for not urging my final departure from Osbaldistone-Hall, would, I doubted not, be received as such by my parent. But I begged permission to come to London, for a short time at least, to meet and refute the infamous calumnies, which had been circulated concerning me in so public a manner. Having made up my packet, in which my earnest desire to vindicate my character was strangely blended with reluctance to quit my present place of residence, I rode over to the post town, and, deposited my letter in the office. By doing so, I obtained possession, somewhat earlier than I should otherwise have done, of the following letter from my friend Mr Oven.

“DEAR MR FRANCIS,

“Your’s received per favour of Mr R. Osbaldistone, and note the contents. Shall do Mr R. O. such civilities as are in my power, and have taken him to see the Bank and Custom-house. He seems a sober, steady young gentleman, and takes to business; so will be of service to the firm. Could have wished another person had turned his mind that way, but God’s will be done. As cash may be scarce in those parts, have to trust you will excuse my inclosing a goldsmith’s bill at six days sight, on Messrs Hooper and Girder of Newcastle, for L.100, which I doubt not will be duly



honoured. — I remain, as in duty bound, dear Mr Frank, your very respectful and obedient servant,

“JOSEPH OWEN.”

“*Postscriptum.* — Hope you will advise the above coming safe to hand. Am sorry we have so few of yours. Your father says he is as usual, but looks poorly.”

From this epistle, written in old Owen's formal style, I was rather surprised to observe that he made no acknowledgment of that private letter which I had written to him, with a view to possess him of Rashleigh's real character, although, from the course of post, it seemed certain that he ought to have received it. Yet I had sent it by the usual conveyance from the Hall, and had no reason to suspect that it could miscarry upon the road. As it comprised matters of great importance, both to my father and to myself, I sat down in the post-office, and again wrote to Owen, recapitulating the heads of my [former letter, and requesting to know, in course of post, if it had reached him in safety. I also acknowledged the receipt of the bill, and promised to make use of the contents, if I should have any occasion for money. I thought, indeed, it was odd that my father should leave the care of



supplying my necessities to his clerk; but I concluded it was a matter arranged between them. At any rate, Owen was a bachelor, rich in his way, and passionately attached to me, so that I had no hesitation in being obliged to him for a small sum, which I resolved to consider as a loan, to be returned with my earliest ability, in case it was not previously repaid by my father; and I expressed myself to this purpose to Mr Owen. A shop-keeper in the little town, to whom the post-master directed me, readily gave me in gold the amount of my bill on Messrs Hooper and Girder, so that I returned to Osbaldistone-Hall a good deal richer than I had set forth. This recruit to my finances was not a matter of indifference to me, as I was necessarily involved in some expenses at Osbaldistone-Hall; and I had seen, with some uneasy impatience, that the sum which my travelling expenses had left unexhausted at my arrival there, was imperceptibly diminishing. This source of anxiety was for the present removed. On my arrival at Hall, I found Sir Hildebrand and all his offspring had gone down to the little hamlet, called Trinlay-Knowe, "to see," as Andrew Fairservice expressed it, "a when midden-cocks pike ilk ithers harns out."

"It is, indeed, a brutal amusement, Andrew; I suppose you have none such in Scotland?"



“Na, na,” answered Andrew boldly; then shaded away his negative with, “unless it be on Eastern’s-e’en, or the like o’ that — But indeed it’s no muckle matter what the folk do to the midden pootry, for they haud siccan a skarting and scraping in the yard, that there’s nae getting a bean or a pea keepit for them. — But I am wondering what it is that leaves that turret-door open; now that Mr Rashleigh’s away, it canna be him, I trow.”

The turret-door to which he alluded, opened to the garden at the bottom of a winding-stair, leading down from Mr Rashleigh’s apartment. This, as I have already mentioned, was situated in a sequestered part of the house, communicating with the library by a private entrance, and by another intricate and dark vaulted passage, with the rest of the house. A long narrow turf-walk led, between two high holly hedges, from the turret-door to a little postern in the wall of the garden. By means of these communications, Rashleigh, whose movements were very independent of those of the rest of his family, could leave the Hall or return to it at pleasure, without his absence or presence attracting any observation. But during his absence the stair and the turret-door were entirely disused, and this made Andrew’s observation somewhat remarkable.



“Have you often observed that door open?” was my question.

“No just that often neither; but I hae noticed it ance or twice — I’m thinking it maun hae been the priest, Father Vaughan, as they ca’ him. Ye’ll no catch ane o’ the servants ganging up that stair, puir frightened heathens that they are, for fear o’ bogles, and brownies, and lang nebbit things frae the neist warld. But father Vaughan thinks himself a privileged person — set him up and lay him down! — I’se be caution the warst stibbler that ever sticket a sermon out ower the Tweed yonder, wad lay a ghaist twice as fast as him, wi’ his holy water and his idolatrous trinkets. I dinna believe he speaks gude Latin neither; at least he disna take me up when I tell him the learned names of the plants.”

Of Father Vaughan, who divided his time and his ghostly care between Osbaldistone-Hall, and about half a dozen mansions of catholic gentlemen in the neighbourhood, I have as yet said nothing, for I had seen but little. He was aged about sixty, of a good family, as I was given to understand, in the north; of a striking and imposing presence, grave in his exterior, and much respected among the catholics of Northumberland, as a worthy and upright man. Yet Father Vaughan did not altogether lack those peculiarities which distinguish his order. There hung about him



an air of mystery, which, in protestant eyes, savoured of priestcraft. The natives (such they might be well termed) of Osbaldistone - Hall, looked up to him with much more fear, or at least more awe, than affection. His condemnation of their revels was evident, from their being discontinued in some measure when the priest was a resident at the Hall. Even Sir Hildebrand himself put some restraint upon his conduct at such times, which perhaps rendered Father Vaughan's presence rather irksome than otherwise. He had the well-bred, insinuating, and almost flattering address, peculiar to the clergy of his persuasion, especially in England, where the lay catholic, hemmed in by penal laws, and by the restrictions of his sect and recommendation of his pastor, often exhibits a reserved, and almost a timid manner, in the society of protestants; while the priest, privileged by his order to mingle with persons of all creeds, is open, alert, and liberal in his intercourse with them, desirous of popularity, and usually skilful in the mode of obtaining it.

Father Vaughan was a particular acquaintance of Rashleigh's, otherwise, in all probability, he would scarce have been able to maintain his footing at Osbaldistone-Hall. This gave me no desire to cultivate his intimacy, nor did he seem to make any advances towards mine; so our



occasional intercourse was confined to the exchange of mere civility. I considered it as extremely probable that Mr Vaughan might occupy Rashleigh's apartments during his occasional residence at the Hall; and his profession rendered it likely that he should occasionally be a tenant of the library. Nothing was more probable than that it might have been his candle which had excited my attention on a preceding evening. This led me involuntarily to recollect that the intercourse between Miss Vernon and the priest was marked with something like the same mystery which characterized her communications with Rashleigh. I had never heard her mention Vaughan's name, or even allude to him, excepting on the occasion of our first meeting, when she mentioned the old priest and Rashleigh as the only conversible beings, besides herself, in Osbaldistone-Hall. Yet although silent with respect to Father Vaughan, his arrival at the Hall never failed to impress Miss Vernon with an anxious and fluttering tremor, which lasted until they had exchanged one or two significant glances.

Whatever the mystery might be which overclouded the destinies of this beautiful and interesting female, it was clear that Father Vaughan was implicated in it; unless, indeed, I could suppose that he was the agent employed to procure her settlement in the cloister, in the event



of her rejecting a union with either of my cousins, — an office which would sufficiently account for her obvious emotion at his appearance. As to the rest, they did not seem to converse much together, or even to seek each others society. Their league, if any subsisted between them, was of a tacit and understood nature, operating on their actions without any necessity of speech. I recollected, however, on reflection, that I had once or twice discovered signs pass betwixt them, which I had at the time supposed to bear reference to some hint concerning Miss Vernon's religious observances, knowing how artfully the catholic clergy maintain, at all times and seasons, their influence over the mind of their followers. But now I was disposed to assign to these communications a deeper and more mysterious import. Did he hold private meetings with Miss Vernon in the library? was a question which occupied my thoughts; and if so, for what purpose? And why should she have admitted an intimate of the deceitful Rashleigh to such close confidence?

These questions and difficulties pressed on my mind with an interest which was greatly increased by the possibility of resolving them. I had already begun to suspect that my friendship for Diana Vernon was not altogether so disinterested as in wisdom it ought to have been. I had already



felt myself becoming jealous of the contemptible  
 lout Thorncliff, and taking more notice, than in  
 prudence or dignity of feeling I ought to have  
 done, of his silly attempts to provoke me. And  
 now I was scrutinizing the conduct of Miss Ver-  
 non with the most close and eager observation,  
 which I in vain endeavoured to palm on myself  
 as the offspring of idle curiosity. All these, like  
 Benedick's brushing his hat of a morning, were  
 signs that the sweet youth was in love; and while  
 my judgment still denied that I had been guilty  
 of forming an attachment so imprudent, she  
 resembled those ignorant guides, who, when they  
 have led the traveller and themselves into irre-  
 trievable error, persist in obstinately affirming it  
 to be impossible that they can have missed the  
 way.



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## CHAPTER XVI.

*“It happened one day about noon, going to my boat, I was exceedingly surprised with the print of a man’s naked foot on the shore, which was very plain to be seen on the sand.”*

*Robinson Crusoe.*

**W**ITH the blended feelings of interest and jealousy which were engendered by Miss Vernon’s singular situation, my observations of her looks and actions became acutely sharpened, and that to a degree, which, notwithstanding my efforts to conceal it, could not escape her penetration. The sense that she was observed, or, more properly speaking, that she was watched by my looks, seemed to give Diana a mixture of embarrassment, pain, and pettishness. At times it seemed that she sought an opportunity of resenting a conduct which she could not but feel as offensive, considering the frankness with which



she had mentioned the difficulties that surrounded her. At other times she seemed prepared to expostulate upon the subject. But either her courage failed, or some other sentiment impeded her seeking an eclairsissement. Her displeasure evaporated in repartee, and her expostulations died on her lips. We stood in a singular relation to each other, spending, and by mutual choice, much of our time in close society with each other, yet disguising our mutual sentiments, and jealous of, or offended by, each others actions. There was betwixt us intimacy without confidence; on one side love without hope or purpose, and curiosity without any rational or justifiable motive; and on the other, embarrassment and doubt, occasionally mingled with displeasure. Yet I believe that this agitation of the passions, such is the nature of the human bosom, as it continued by a thousand irritating and interesting, though petty circumstances, to render Miss Vernon and me the constant objects of each others thoughts, tended, upon the whole, to increase the attachment with which we were naturally disposed to regard each other. But although my vanity early discovered that my presence at Osbaldistone-Hall had given Diana some additional reason for disliking the cloister, I could by no means confide in an affection which seemed completely subordinate to the mysteries of her singular situation.



Miss Vernon was of a character far too formed and determined, to permit her love for me to overpower either her sense of duty or of prudence, and she gave me a proof of this in a conversation which we had together about this period.

We were sitting together in the library I have so often mentioned. Miss Vernon, in turning over a copy of the Orlando Furioso, which belonged to me, shook a piece of written paper from between the leaves. I hastened to lift it, but she prevented me.

"It is verse," she said, on glancing at the paper; and then unfolding it, but as if to wait my answer before proceeding — "May I take the liberty? — nay, if you blush and stammer, I must do violence to your modesty, and suppose that permission is granted."

"It is not worthy your perusal — a scrap of a translation — My dear Miss Vernon, it would be too severe a trial, that you, who understand the original so well, should sit in judgment."

"Mine honest friend," replied Diana, "do not, if you will be guided by my advice, bait your hook with too much humility; for, ten to one, it will not catch a single compliment. You know I belong to the unpopular family of Tell-truths, and would not flatter Apollo for his lyre."



She proceeded to read the first stanza, which was nearly to the following purpose:

«Ladies, and knights, and arms, and love's fair  
flame,

Deeds of emprise and courtesy I sing;  
What time the Moors from sultry Africk came,  
Led on by Agramant, their youthful king —  
He whom revenge and hasty ire did bring  
O'er the broad wave, in France to waste and  
war;

Such ills from old Trojano's death did spring,  
Which to avenge he came from realms afar,  
And menaced Christian Charles, the Roman  
Emperor.

«Of dauntless Roland, too, my strain shall sound,  
In import never known in prose or rhyme,  
How He, the chief, of judgment deem'd profound,  
For luckless love was crazed upon a time —”

«There is a great deal of it,” said she, glancing along the paper, and interrupting the sweetest sounds which mortal ears can drink in, — those of a youthful poet's verses, namely, read by the lips which are dearest to them.

«Much more than ought to engage your attention, Miss Vernon,” said I, something mortified; and I took the verses from her unreluctant hand



— «and yet,” I continued, «shut up as I am in this retired situation, I have felt some times I could not amuse myself better than by carrying on, merely for my own amusement you will of course understand, the version of this fascinating author, which I began some months since, when I was on the banks of the Garonne.”

«The question would only be,” said Diana, gravely, «whether you could not spend your time to better purpose?”

«You mean in original composition,” said I, greatly flattered; «but to say truth, my genius rather lies in finding words and rhymes than ideas; and, therefore, I am happy to use those which Ariosto has prepared to my hand. However, Miss Vernon, with the encouragement you give —”

«Pardon, me, Frank; it is encouragement not of my giving, but of your taking. I meant neither original composition nor translation, since I think you might employ your time to far better purpose than in either. You are mortified,” she continued, «and I am sorry to be the cause.”

«Not mortified, — certainly not mortified,” said I, (with the best grace I could muster, and it was but indifferently assumed;) «I am too much obliged by the interest you take in me.”

«Nay, but,” resumed the relentless Diana, «there is both mortification and a little grain of



anger in that constrained tone of voice; do not be angry if I probe your feelings to the bottom — perhaps what I am about to say will affect them still more.”

I felt the childishness of my own conduct, and the superior manliness of Miss Vernon's, and assured her, that she need not fear my wincing under criticism which I knew to be kindly meant.

“That was honestly meant and said,” she replied; “I knew full well that the fiend of poetical irritability flew away with the little preluding cough which ushered in the declaration. And now I must be serious. — Have you heard from your father lately?”

“Not a word,” I replied; “he has not honoured me with a single line during the several months of my residence here.”

“That is strange; — you are a singular race, you bold Osbaldistones. Then you are not aware that he has gone to Holland to arrange some pressing affairs which required his own immediate presence?”

“I never heard a word of it until this moment.”

“And farther, it must be news to you, and I presume scarcely the most agreeable, that he has left Rashleigh in the almost uncontrolled management of his affairs until his return?”



I started, and could not suppress my surprise and apprehension.

„You have reason for alarm,„ said Miss Vernon, very gravely; „and were I you, I would endeavour to meet and obviate the dangers which arise from so undesirable an arrangement.”

„And how is it possible for me to do so?”

„Every thing is possible for him who possesses courage and activity,” said she, with a look resembling one of those heroines of the age of chivalry, whose encouragement was wont to give champions double courage at the hour of need; „and to the timid and hesitating every thing is impossible, because it seems so.”

„And what would you advise, Miss Vernon?” I replied, wishing, yet dreading to hear her answer.

She paused a moment, then answered firmly, — „That you instantly leave Osbaldistone-Hall, and return to London. You have perhaps already,” she continued, in a softer tone, „been here too long; that fault was not yours. Every succeeding moment you waste here will be a crime. Yes, a crime; for I tell you plainly, that if Rashleigh long manages your father’s affairs, you may consider his ruin as consummated.”

„How is this possible?”

„Ask no questions,” she said; „but, believe me, Rashleigh’s views extend far beyond the



possession or increase of commercial wealth: He will only make the command of Mr Osbaldistone's revenues and property the means of putting in motion his own ambitious and extensive schemes. While your father was in Britain this was impossible; during his absence, Rashleigh will possess many opportunities, and he will not neglect to use them."

"But how can I, in disgrace with my father, and divested of all controul over his affairs, prevent this danger by my mere presence in London?"

"That presence alone will do much. — Your claim to interfere is a part of your birthright, and is inalienable. You will have the countenance, doubtless, of your father's head-clerk, and confidential friends and partners. Above all, Rashleigh's schemes are of a nature that" — (she stopped abruptly, as if fearful of saying too much) — "are, in short," she resumed, "of the nature of all selfish and unconscientious plans, which are speedily abandoned so soon as those who frame them perceive their arts are discovered and watched. Therefore, in the language of your favourite poet —

"To horse! to horse! urge doubts to those  
that fear."

A feeling, irresistible in its impulse, induced me to reply, — "Ah! Diana, can *you* give me



advice to leave Osbaldistone-Hall? — then, indeed, I have already been a resident here too long.”

Miss Vernon coloured, but proceeded with great firmness; „Indeed, I do give you this advice — not only to quit Osbaldistone-Hall, but never to return to it more. You have only one friend to regret here,” she continued, forcing a smile, „and she has been long accustomed to sacrifice her friendships and her comforts to the welfare of others. In the world you will meet an hundred whose friendship will be as disinterested — more useful — less encumbered by untoward circumstances — less influenced by evil tongues and evil times.”

„Never!” I exclaimed, „Never! the world can afford me nothing to repay what I must leave behind me.” Here I took her hand, and pressed it to my lips.

„This is folly!” she exclaimed — „This is madness!” and she struggled to withdraw her hand from my grasp, but not so stubbornly as actually to succeed, until I had held it for nearly a minute. „Hear me, sir!” she said, „and curb this unmanly burst of passion. I am, by a solemn contract, the bride of Heaven, unless I could prefer being wedded to villainy in the person of Rashleigh Osbaldistone, or brutality in that of his brother. I am, therefore, the bride of



Heaven, betrothed to the convent from my cradle. To me, therefore, these raptures are misapplied — they only serve to prove a farther necessity for your departure, and that without delay.” At these words she broke suddenly off, and said, but in a suppressed tone of voice, „Leave me instantly — we will meet here again, but it must be for the last time.”

My eyes followed the direction of hers as she spoke, and I thought I saw the tapestry shake, which covered the door of the secret passage from Rashleigh’s room to the library. I conceived we were observed, and turned an enquiring glance on Miss Vernon.

„It is nothing,” said she, faintly; „a rat behind the arras.”

„Dead for a ducat,” would have been my reply, had I dared to give way to the feelings, which rose indignant at the idea of being subjected to an eve’s-dropper on such an occasion. Prudence, and the necessity of suppressing my passion, and obeying Diana’s reiterated command of „Leave me! leave me!” came in time to prevent any rash action. I left the apartment in a wild whirl and giddiness of mind, which I in vain attempted to compose when I returned to my own.

A chaos of thoughts intruded themselves on me at once, passing hastily through my mind, intercepting and overshadowing each other, and



resembling those fogs, which in mountainous countries are wont to descend in obscure volumes, and disfigure or obliterate the usual marks by which the traveller steers his course through the wilds. The dark and undefined idea of danger arising to my father from the machinations of such a man as Rashleigh Osbaldistone, — the half-declaration of love which I had offered to Miss Vernon's acceptance, — the acknowledged difficulties of her situation, bound by a previous contract to sacrifice herself to a cloister, or to an ill-assorted marriage, — all pressed themselves at once upon my recollection, while my judgment was unable deliberately to consider any of them in its just light and bearings. But chiefly, and above all the rest, I was perplexed by the manner in which Miss Vernon had received my tender of affection, and by her manner, which, fluctuating betwixt sympathy and firmness, seemed to intimate that I possessed an interest in her bosom, but not of force sufficient to counterbalance the obstacles to her avowing a mutual affection. The glance of fear, rather than surprise, with which she had watched the motion of the tapestry over the concealed door, implied an apprehension of danger which I could not but suppose well grounded, for Diana Vernon was little subject to the nervous emotions of her sex, and totally unapt to fear without actual



and rational cause. Of what nature could these mysteries be with which she was surrounded as with an enchanter's spell, and which seemed continually to exert an active influence over her thoughts and actions, though their agents were never visible? On this subject of doubt my mind finally rested, as if glad to shake itself free from investigating the propriety or prudence of my own conduct, by transferring the enquiry to what concerned Miss Vernon. I will be resolved, I concluded, ere I leave Osbaldistone-Hall, concerning the light in which I must in future regard this fascinating being, over whose life frankness and mystery seem to have divided their reign, the former inspiring her words and sentiments, the latter spreading in misty influence over all her actions.

Joined to the obvious interest which arose from curiosity and anxious passion, there mingled in my feelings a strong, though unavowed and undefined infusion of jealousy. This sentiment, which springs up with love as naturally as the tares with the wheat, was excited by the degree of influence which Diana appeared to concede to those unseen beings by whom her actions were limited. The more I reflected upon her character, the more I was internally, though unwillingly, convinced, that she was formed to set at defiance all controul, excepting that which arose from



affection; and I felt a strong, bitter, and gnawing suspicion, that such was the foundation of that influence by which she was overawed.

These tormenting doubts strengthened my desire to penetrate into the secret of Miss Vernon's conduct, and in the prosecution of this sage adventure, I formed a resolution, of which, if you are not weary of these details, you will find the result in the next Chapter.



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CHAPTER XVII.

*„I hear a voice you cannot hear,
Which says, I must not stay;
I see a hand you cannot see,
Which beckons me away.”*

TICKELL.

I have already told you, Tresham, if you deign to bear it in remembrance, that my evening visits to the library had seldom been made excepting by appointment, and under the sanction of old Dame Martha's presence. This, however, was entirely a tacit conventional arrangement of my own instituting. Of late, as the embarrassments of our relative situation had increased, Miss Vernon and I had never met in the evening at all. She had therefore no reason to suppose that I was likely to seek a renewal of these interviews, and especially without some previous

notice or appointment betwixt us, that Martha might, as usual, be placed upon duty; but, on the other hand, this cautionary provision was a matter of understanding, not of express enactment. The library was open to me, as to the other members of the family, at all hours of the day and night, and I could not be accused of intrusion, however suddenly and unexpectedly I might make my appearance in it. My belief was strong, that in this apartment Miss Vernon occasionally received Vaughan, or some other person, by whose opinion she was accustomed to regulate her conduct, and that at the times when she could do so with least chance of interruption. The lights which gleamed in the library at unusual hours, — the passing shadows which I had myself remarked, — the footsteps which might be traced in the morning dew from the turret door to the postern-gate in the garden, — sounds and sights which some of the servants, and Andrew Fairservice in particular, had observed and accounted for in their own way, all went to shew that the place was visited by some one different from the ordinary inmates of the hall. Connected as this visitant must probably be with the fates of Diana Vernon, I did not hesitate to form a plan of discovering who or what he was, — how far his influence was likely to produce good or evil consequences to her on

whom he acted, — above all, though I endeavoured to persuade myself that this was a mere subordinate consideration, — above all, I desired to know by what means this person had acquired or maintained his influence over Diana, and whether he ruled over her by fear or by affection. The proof that this jealous curiosity was uppermost in my mind, arose from my imagination almost ascribing Miss Vernon's conduct to the influence of some one individual agent, although, for aught I knew about the matter, her advisers might be as numerous as Legion. I remarked this over and over to myself, but I found that my mind still settled back in my original conviction, that one single individual, of the masculine sex, and, in all probability, young and handsome, was at the bottom of Miss Vernon's conduct; and it was with a burning desire of discovering, or rather of detecting, such a rival, that I stationed myself in the garden to watch the moment when the lights should appear in the library windows.

So eager, however, was my impatience, that I commenced my watch for a phenomenon, which could not appear until darkness, a full hour before the daylight disappeared, upon a July evening. It was Sabbath, and all the walks were still and solitary. I walked up and down for some time enjoying the refreshing coolness of a

summer evening, and meditating on the probable consequences of my enterprise. The fresh and balmy air of the garden, impregnated with fragrance, produced its usual sedative effects on my over-heated and feverish blood; and as these took place, the turmoil of my mind began proportionally to abate, and I was led to question the right I had to interfere with Miss Vernon's secrets, or with those of my uncle's family. What was it to me whom my uncle might chuse to conceal in his house, where I was myself a guest only by tolerance? And what title had I to pry into the affairs of Miss Vernon, fraught, as she had avowed them to be, with mystery, into which she desired no scrutiny?

Passion and self-will were ready with their answers to these questions. In detecting this secret guest, I was in all probability about to do service to Sir Hildebrand, who was probably ignorant of the intrigues carried on in his family, and a still more important service to Miss Vernon, whose frank simplicity of character exposed her to so many risks in maintaining a private correspondence, perhaps with a person of doubtful or dangerous character. If I seemed to intrude myself on her confidence, it was with the generous and disinterested (yes, I even ventured to call it the *disinterested*) intention of guiding, defending, and protecting her against craft, —

against malice, — above all, against the secret counsellor whom she had chosen for her confidant. Such were the arguments which my will boldly preferred to my conscience, as coin which ought to be current; and which conscience, like a grumbling shopkeeper, was contented to accept, rather than come to an open breach with a customer, though more than doubting that the tender was spurious.

While I paced the green alleys, debating these things *pro* and *con*, I suddenly lighted upon Andrew Fairservice, perched up like a statue by a range of bee-hives, in an attitude of devout contemplation, one eye, however, watching the motions of the little irritable citizens, who were settling in their straw-thatched mansion for the evening, and the other fixed on a book of devotion, which much attrition had deprived of its corners, and worn into an oval shape; a circumstance, which, with the close print and dingy colour of the volume in question, gave it an air of most respectable antiquity.

“I was e’en taking a spell o’ worthy Mess John Quackleben’s Flower of a Sweet Savour sawn on the Middenstead of this World,” said Andrew, closing his book at my appearance, and putting his horn spectacles, by way of mark, at the place where he had been reading.

«And the bees, I observe, were dividing your attention, Andrew, with the learned author?»

«They are a contumacious generation,” replied the gardener; «they hae sax days in the week to hive on, and yet it’s a common observe that they will aye swarm on the Sabbath-day, and keep folk at hame frae hearing the word — But there’s nae preaching at Graneagain Chapel the e’en — that’s aye ae mercy.”

«You might have gone to parish church as I did, Andrew, and heard an excellent discourse.”

«Clauts o’ cauld parridge — clauts o’ cauld parridge,” replied Andrew, with a most supercilious sneer, — «gude aneugh for dogs, begging your honour’s pardon — Aye! I might nae doubt hae heard the curate linking awa’ at it in his white sark yonder, and the musicians playing on whistles, mair like a penny wedding than a sermon — and to the boot of that, I might hae gaen to even-song, and heard Daddie Docharty mumbling his mass — muckle the better I wad hae been o’ that.”

«Docharty!” said I, (this was the name of an old priest, an Irishman I think, who sometimes officiated at Osbaldistone-Hall.) «I thought Father Vaughan had been at the Hall. He was there yesterday.”

«Ay,” replied Andrew; «but he left it yestreen, to gang to Greystock, or some o’ thae west country

haulds. There's an unco stir amang them a' e'enow. They are as busy as my bees are — God sain them! that I suld even the puir things to the like o' papists. Ye see this is the second swarm, and whiles they will swarm off in the afternoon. The first swarm set off sune in the morning. But I am thinking they are settled in their skeps for the night. Sae I wuss your honour good night, and grace, and muckle o't."

So saying, Andrew retreated; but often cast a parting glance upon the *skeps*, as he called tho bee-hives.

I had indirectly gained from him an important piece of information, that Father Vaughan, namely, was not supposed to be at the Hall. If, therefore, there appeared light in the windows of the library this evening, it either could not be his, or he was observing a very secret and suspicious line of conduct. I waited with impatience the time of sun-set and of twilight. It had hardly arrived, ere a gleam from the windows of the library was seen, dimly distinguishable amidst the still enduring light of evening. I marked its first glimpse, however, as speedily as the benighted sailor descries the first distant twinkle of the light-house which marks his course. The feelings of doubt and propriety, which had hitherto contended with my curiosity and jealousy, vanished when an opportunity of gratifying

the former was presented to me. I re-entered the house, and, avoiding the more frequented apartments with the consciousness of one who wishes to keep his purpose secret, I reached the door of the library, — hesitated for a moment as my hand was upon the latch, — heard a suppressed step within, — opened the door, — and found Miss Vernon alone.

Diana appeared surprised, — whether at my sudden entrance, or for some other cause, I could not guess; but there was in her appearance a degree of flutter, which I had never before remarked, and which I knew could only be produced by unusual emotion. Yet she was calm in a moment; and such is the force of conscience, that I, who studied to surprise her, seemed myself the surprised, and was certainly the embarrassed person.

“Has any thing happened?” said Miss Vernon. “Has any one arrived at the Hall?”

“No one that I know of,” I answered in some confusion; “I only sought the Orlando.”

“It lies there,” said Miss Vernon, pointing to the table.

In removing one or two books to get at that which I pretended to seek, I was, in truth, meditating to make a handsome retreat from an investigation, to which I felt my assurance inadequate, when I perceived a man’s glove lying

upon the table. My eyes encountered those of Miss Vernon, who blushed deeply.

«It is one of my reliques,” she said, with hesitation, replying not to my words, but to my looks; «it is one of the gloves of my grandfather, the original of the superb Vandyke which you admire.”

As if she thought something more than her bare assertion was necessary, to make her assertion true, she opened a drawer of the large oaken-table, and, taking out another glove, threw it towards me. When a temper naturally ingenuous stoops to equivocate or to dissemble, the anxious pain with which the unwonted task is laboured, often induces the hearer to doubt the authenticity of the tale. I cast a hasty glance on both gloves, and then replied gravely — «The gloves resemble each other, doubtless, in the form and embroidery; but they cannot form a pair, since they both belong to the right hand.”

She bit her lip with anger, and again coloured deeply.

«You do right to expose me,” she replied, with bitterness; «some friends would have only judged from what I said, that I chose to give no particular explanation of a circumstance which calls for none — at least to a stranger. You have judged better, and have made me feel, not only the meanness of duplicity, but my own inade-

quacy to sustain the task of a dissembler. I now tell you distinctly, that that glove is not the fellow, as you have acutely discerned, to the one which I just now produced. It belongs to a friend yet dearer to me than the original of Vandyke's picture — a friend by whose counsels I have been, and will be guided — whom I honour — whom I" — She paused.

I was irritated at her manner, and filled up the blank in my own way. "Whom she loves, Miss Vernon would say."

"And if I do say so," she replied, haughtily, "by whom shall my affection be called to account?"

"Not by me, Miss Vernon, assuredly. I entreat you to hold me acquitted of such presumption. *But,*" I continued, with some emphasis, for I was now piqued in return, "I hope Miss Vernon will pardon a friend, from whom she seems disposed to withdraw the title, for observing" —

"Observe nothing, sir," she interrupted, with some vehemence, "excepting that I will neither be doubted nor questioned. There does not exist one by whom I will be either interrogated or judged; and if you sought this unusual time of presenting yourself, in order to spy upon my privacy, the friendship or interest with which you pretend to regard me, is a poor excuse for your uncivil curiosity."

“I relieve you of my presence,” said I, with pride equal to her own; for my temper has ever been a stranger to stooping, even in cases where my feelings were most deeply interested — “I relieve you of my presence. I awake from a pleasant, but a most delusive dream; and — but we understand each other.”

I had reached the door of the apartment, when Miss Vernon, whose movements were sometimes so rapid as to seem almost instinctive, overtook me, and, catching hold of my arm, stopped me with that air of authority which she could so whimsically assume, and which, from the naïveté and simplicity of her manner, had an effect so peculiarly interesting.

“Stop, Mr Frank,” she said; “you are not to leave me in that way neither; I am not so amply provided with friends, that I can afford to throw away even the ungrateful and the selfish. Mark what I say, Mr Francis Osbaldistone; you shall know nothing of this mysterious glove,” and she held it up as she spoke — “nothing — no, not a single iota more than you know already; and yet I will not permit it to be a gauntlet of strife and defiance betwixt us. My time here”, she said, sinking into a tone somewhat softer, “must necessarily be very short; yours must be still shorter: We are soon to part, never to meet again; do not let us quarrel, or make my mysterious mi-

series the pretext for farther embittering the few hours we shall ever pass together on this side of eternity."

I do not know, Tresham, by what witchery this fascinating creature obtained such complete management over a temper, which I cannot at all times manage myself. I had determined, on entering the library, to seek a complete explanation with Miss Vernon. I had found that she refused it with indignant defiance, and avowed to my face the preference of a rival; for what other construction could I put on her declared preference of her mysterious confidant? And yet, while I was on the point of leaving the apartment, and breaking with her for ever, it cost her but a change of look and tone from that of real and haughty resentment, to that of kind and playful despotism, again shaded off into melancholy and serious feeling, to lead me back to my seat, her willing subject, on her own hard terms.

"What does this avail?" said I, as I sate down. "What can this avail, Miss Vernon? Why should I witness embarrassments which I cannot relieve, and mysteries which I offend you even by attempting to penetrate? Inexperienced as you are in the world, you must still be aware, that a beautiful young woman can have but one male friend. Even in a male friend, I should be jea-

lous of a confidence shared with a third party unknow and concealed; but with *you*, Miss Vernon" —

"You are, of course, jealous, in all the tenses and moods of that amicable passion. But, my good friend, you have all this time spoke nothing but the paltry gossip which simpletons repeat from play-books and romances, till they give mere cant a real and powerful influence over their minds. Boys and girls prate themselves into love; and when their love is like to fall asleep, they prate and tease themselves into jealousy. But you and I, Frank, are rational beings, and neither silly nor idle enough to talk ourselves into any other relation, than that of plain honest disinterested friendship. Any other union is as far out of our reach as if I were man, or you woman. — To speak truth," she added, after a moment's hesitation, "even though I am so complaisant to the decorum of my sex as to blush a little at my own plain dealing, we cannot marry, if we would; and we ought not, if we could."

And certainly, Tresham, she did blush most angelically as she made this cruel declaration. I was about to attack both her positions, entirely forgetting those very suspicions which had been confirmed in the course of the evening, but she proceeded with a cold firmness which approached to severity.

„What I say is sober and indisputable truth, on which I will neither hear question nor explanation. We are therefore friends, Mr Osbaldistone? — are we not?“ She held out her hand, and taking mine, added, — „And nothing to each other now, or henceforward, excepting friends.“

She let go my hand. I sunk it and my head at once, fairly *overcrowded*, as Spenser would have termed it, by the mingled kindness and firmness of her manner. She hastened to change the subject.

„Here is a letter,“ she said, „directed for you, Mr Osbaldistone, very duly and distinctly; but which, notwithstanding the caution of the person who wrote and addressed it, might perhaps never have reached your hands, had it not fallen into the possession of a certain Pacolet, or enchanted dwarf of mine, whom, like all distressed damsels of romance, I retain in my secret service.“

I opened the letter, and glanced over the contents — the unfolded sheet of paper dropped from my hands, with the involuntary exclamation, „Gracious Heaven! my folly and disobedience have ruined my father!“

Miss Vernon rose with looks of real and affectionate alarm. „You grow pale — you are ill — shall I bring you a glass of water? Be a man,

Mr Osbaldistone, and a firm one. Is your father — is he no more?"

„He lives," said I, „thank God! but to what distress and difficulty" —

„If that be all, despair not. May I read this letter?" she said, taking it up.

I assented, hardly knowing what I said. She read it with great attention.

„Who is this Mr Tresham, who signs the letter?"

„My father's partner," (your own good father, Will,) „but he is little in the habit of acting personally in the business of the house."

„He writes here," said Miss Vernon, „of various letters sent to you previously."

„I have received none of them," I replied.

„And it appears," she continued, „that Rashleigh, who has taken the full management of affairs during your father's absence in Holland, has sometime since left London for Scotland, with effects and remittances to take up large bills granted by your father to persons in that country, and that he has not since been heard of."

„It is but too true."

„And here has been," she added, looking at the letter, „a head-clerk, or some such person, — Owenson — Owen — dispatched to Glasgow, to find out Rashleigh, if possible, and you are

entreated to repair to the same place and assist him in his researches."

"It is even so, and I must depart instantly."

"Stay but one moment," said Miss Vernon. "It seems to me that the worst which can come of this matter will be the loss of a certain sum of money; and can that bring tears into your eyes? For shame, Mr Osbaldistone!"

"You do me injustice, Miss Vernon" I answered. "I grieve not for the loss, but for the effect which I know it will produce on the spirits and health of my father, to whom mercantile credit is as honour; and who, if declared insolvent, would sink into the grave, oppressed by a sense of grief, remorse, and despair, like that of a soldier convicted of cowardice, or a man of honour who had lost his rank and character in society. All this I might have prevented by a trifling sacrifice of the foolish pride and indolence which recoiled from sharing the labours of his honourable and useful profession. Good Heaven! how shall I redeem the consequences of my error!"

"By instantly repairing to Glasgow, as you are conjured to do by the friend who writes this letter."

"But if Rashleigh has really formed this base and unconscientious scheme of plundering his benefactor, what prospect is there that I can

find means of frustrating a plan so deeply laid?"

„The prospect, indeed, may be uncertain; but on the other hand, there is no possibility of your doing any service to your father by remaining here. — Remember, had you been on the post destined for you, this disaster could not have happened; hasten to that which is now pointed out, and it may possibly be retrieved — Yet stay — do not leave this room until I return.”

She left me in confusion and amazement, amid which, however, I could find a lucid interval to admire the firmness, composure, and presence of mind, which Miss Vernon seemed to possess on every crisis, however sudden.

In a few minutes she returned with a sheet of paper in her hand, folded and sealed like a letter, but without address. „I trust you,” she said, „with this proof of my friendship, because I have the most perfect confidence in your honour. If I understand the nature of your distress rightly, the funds in Rashleigh’s possession must be recovered by a certain day — the 12th of September, I think, is named, in order that they may be applied to pay the bills in question; and, consequently, that, if adequate funds be provided before that period, your father’s credit is safe from the apprehended calamity.”

„Certainly — I so understand Mr Tresham” —

I looked at your father's letter again, and added, "There cannot be a doubt of it."

"Well," said Diana, "in that case my little Pacolet may be of use to you. — You have heard of a spell contained in a letter. Take this packet; do not open it until other and ordinary means have failed; if you succeed by your own exertions, I trust to your honour for destroying it without opening or suffering it to be opened. But if not, you may break the seal within ten days of the fated day, and you will find directions which may possibly be of service to you. — Adieu, Frank; we never meet more — but sometimes think on your friend Die Vernon."

She extended her hand, but I clasped her to my bosom. She sighed as she extricated herself from the embrace which she permitted, escaped to the door which led to her own apartment, and I saw her no more.

CHAPTER XVIII.

And hurry, hurry, off they rode,

As fast as fast might be;

Hurra, hurra, the dead can ride!

Dost fear to ride with me?

BURGHER.

THERE is one advantage in an accumulation of evils differing in cause and character, that the distraction which they afford by their contradictory operation prevents the patient from being overwhelmed under either. I was deeply grieved at my separation from Miss Vernon, yet not so much so as I should have been had not my father's apprehended distresses forced themselves on my attention; and I was distressed by the

news of Mr Tresham, yet less so than if they had fully occupied my mind. I was neither a false lover nor an unfeeling son; but man can give but a certain portion of distressful emotions to the causes which demand them, and if two operate at once, our sympathy, like the funds of a compounding bankrupt, can only be divided between them. Such were my reflections when I gained my apartment — it seems, from the illustration, they already began to have a twang of commerce in them.

I set myself seriously to consider your father's letter. It was not very distinct, and referred for several particulars to Owen, whom I was entreated to meet with as soon as possible at a Scotch town, called Glasgow; being informed, moreover, that my old friend was to be heard of at Messrs Macvittie, Macfin, and Company, merchants in the Gallowgate of the said town. It likewise alluded to several letters, which, as it appeared to me, must have miscarried or have been intercepted, and complained of my obdurate silence in terms which would have been highly unjust, had my letters reached their purposed destination. I was amazed as I read. That the spirit of Rashleigh walked around me, and conjured up these doubts and difficulties by which I was surrounded, I could not doubt for one instant; yet it was frightful to conceive

the extent of combined villainy and power which he must have employed to the perpetration of his designs. Let me do myself justice in one respect; the evil of parting from Miss Vernon, however distressing it might in other respects and at another time have appeared to me, sunk into a subordinate consideration when I thought of the dangers impending over my father. I did not myself set a high estimation on wealth, and had the affectation of most young men of lively imagination, who suppose that they can better dispense with the possession of money, than resign their time and faculties to the labour necessary to acquire it. But in my father's case, I knew that bankruptcy would be considered as an utter and irretrievable disgrace, to which life would afford no comfort, and death the speediest and sole relief.

My mind, therefore, was bent on averting this catastrophe, with an intensity which the interest could not have produced had it referred to my own fortunes; and the result of my deliberation was a firm resolution to depart from Osbaldistone-Hall the next day, and wend my way without loss of time to meet Owen at Glasgow. I did not hold it expedient to intimate my departure to my uncle otherwise than by leaving a letter of thanks for his hospitality, assuring him that sudden and important business

prevented my offering them in person. I knew the blunt old knight would readily excuse ceremony, and I had such a belief in the extent and decided character of Rashleigh's machinations, that I had some apprehension of his having provided means to intercept a journey which was undertaken with a view to disconcert them, if my departure were publicly announced at Osbaldistone-Hall.

I therefore determined to set off on my journey with day-light in the ensuing morning, and to gain the neighbouring kingdom of Scotland before any idea of my departure was entertained at the Hall; but one impediment of consequence was likely to prevent that speed which was the soul of my expedition. I did not know the shortest, or indeed any road to Glasgow; and as, in the circumstances in which I stood, dispatch was of the greatest consequence, I determined to consult Andrew Fairservice upon the subject, as the nearest and most authentic authority within my reach. Late as it was, I set off with the intention of ascertaining this important point, and after a few minutes walk reached the dwelling of the gardener.

Andrew's dwelling was situated at no great distance from the exterior wall of the garden, a snug, comfortable Northumbrian cottage, built of stones roughly dressed with the hammer, and

having the windows and doors decorated with hugh heavy architraves, or lintels, as they are called, of hewn stone, and its roof covered with broad grey flags, instead of slates, thatch, or tiles. A jargonell pear-tree at one end of the cottage, a rivulet, and a flower-plot of a rood in extent, in front, and a kitchen-garden behind; a paddock for a cow, and a small field, cultivated with several crops of grain rather for the benefit of the cottager than for sale, announced the warm and cordial comforts which Old England, even at her most northern extremity, extends to her meanest inhabitants.

As I approached the mansion of the sapient Andrew, I heard a noise, which, being of a nature peculiarly solemn, nasal, and prolonged, led me to think that Andrew, according to the decent and meritorious custom of his countrymen, had assembled some of his neighbours to join in family-exercise, as he called evening devotion. Andrew had indeed neither wife, child, nor female inmate in his family. "The first of his trade," he said, "had had eneugh o' thae cattle." But, notwithstanding, he sometimes contrived to form an audience for himself out of the neighbouring Papists and Church-of-England-men, brands, as he expressed it, snatched out of the burning, on whom he used to exercise his spiritual gifts, in defiance alike of Father Vaug-

han, Father Docharty, Rashleigh, and all the world of Catholics around him, who deemed his interference on such occasions an act of heretical interloping. I conceived it likely, therefore, that the well-disposed neighbours might have assembled to hold some chapel of ease of this nature. The noise, however, when I listened to it more accurately, seemed to proceed entirely from the lungs of the said Andrew; and when I interrupted it by entering the house, I found Fairservice alone, combatting, as he best could, with long words and hard names, and reading aloud, for the purpose of his own edification, a volume of controversial divinity. "I was just taking a spell," said he, laying aside the huge folio volume as I entered, "of the worthy Doctor Lightfoot."

"Lightfoot!" I replied, looking at the ponderous volume with some surprise; "surely your author was rather unhappily named."

"Lightfoot was his name, sir; a divine he was, and another kind of a divine than they hae now-a-days. Always, I crave your pardon for keeping ye standing at the door, but having been mistrysted (gude preserve us) with ae bogle the night already, I was dubious o' opening the yate till I had gaen through the e'ening worship; and I had just finished the fifth chapter

of Nehemiah — if that winna gar them keep their distance, I wot na what will."

"Trysted with a bogle!" said I; "what do you mean by that, Andrew?"

"That," said Andrew, "is as muckle as to say fley'd wi' a ghaist — gude preserve us, I say again!"

"Flay'd by a ghost, Andrew! how am I to understand that?"

"I did not say flay'd," replied Andrew, "but *fley'd*; that is, I got a fleg, and was ready to jump out o' my skin, though naebody offered to whirl it aff my body as a man wad bark a tree."

"I beg a truce to your terrors in the present case, Andrew, and I wish to know whether you can direct me the nearest way to a town in your country of Scotland, called Glasgow?"

"A town ca'd Glasgow!" echoed Andrew Fairservice. "Glasgow's a city, man — And is't the way to Glasgow ye were speering if I kenn'd? — What suld ail me to ken it? — it's no that dooms far frae my ain parish of Dreepdaily, that lies a bittock farther to the west. But what may your honour be gaun to Glasgow for?"

"Particular business."

"That's as muckle as to say, speer nae ques-

tions, and I'll tell ye nae lies — To Glasgow?" he made a short pause — "I am thinking ye wad be the better o' some ane to show ye the road."

"Certainly, if I could meet with any person going that way."

"And your honour, doubtless, wad consider the time and trouble?"

"Unquestionably — my business is pressing, and if you can find any lad to accompany me, I'll pay him handsomely."

"This is no a day to speak o' carnal matters," said Andrew, casting his eyes upwards; "but if it werena Sabbath at e'en, I wad speer what ye wad be content to gi'e to ane that wad bear ye pleasant company on the road, and tell ye the names of the gentlemens' and noblemens' seats and castles, and count their kin to ye?"

"I tell you, all I want to know is the road I must travel; I will pay the fellow to his satisfaction — I will give him any thing in reason."

"Any thing," replied Andrew, "is naething; and this lad that I am speaking o' kens a' the short cuts and queer bye-paths through the hills" —

"I have no time to talk about it, Andrew; do you make the bargain for me your own way."

“Aha! that’s speaking to the purpose,” answered Andrew. — “I am thinking since sae be that sae it is, I’ll be the lad that will guide you mysel.”

“You, Andrew? how will you get away from your employment?”

“I tell’d your honour a while syne that it was lang that I hae been thinking of flitting, maybe as lang as frae the first year I came to Osbaldistone-Hall, — and now I am o’ the mind to gang in gude earnest — better soon as syne — better a finger aff as aye wagging.”

“You leave your service then? — but will you not lose your wages?”

“Nae doubt there will be a certain loss; but then I hae siller o’ the laird’s in my hands that I took for the apples in the auld orchyard, and a sair bargain the folk had that bought them — a wheen green trash — and yet Sir Hildebrand’s as keen to hae the siller (that is, the steward is as pressing about it) as if they had been a’ gowden pippins — and then there’s the siller for the seeds — I’m thinking the wage will be in a manner decently made up. But doubtless your honour will consider my risk of loss when we won to Glasgow — and ye’ll be for setting out forthwith?”

“By day-break in the morning.”

«That's something o' the suddenest — whare am I to find a naig? — Stay — I ken just the beast that will answer me.»

«At five in the morning then, Andrew, you will meet me at the head of the avenue.»

«Deil a fear o' me (that I suld say sae) missing my tryste,» replied Andrew, very briskly; «and, if I might advise, we wad be aff twa hours earlier. I ken the way, dark or light, as weel as blind Ralph Ronaldson, that's travelled ower every moor in the country-side, and does na ken the colour of a heather-cowe when a's dune.»

I highly approved of Andrew's amendment on my original proposal, and we agreed to meet at the place appointed at three in the morning. At once, however, a reflection came across the mind of my intended travelling companion.

«The bogle! the bogle! what if it should come out upon us? — I downa forgather wi' thae things twice in the four-and-twenty hours.»

«Pooh! pooh!» I exclaimed, breaking away from him, «fear nothing from the next world — the earth contains living fiends who can act for themselves without assistance, were the whole host that fell with Lucifer to return to aid and abet them.»

With these words, the import of which was

suggested by my own situation, I left Andrew's habitation and returned to the Hall.

I made the few preparations which were necessary for my proposed journey, examined and loaded my pistols, and then threw myself on my bed, to obtain, if possible, a brief sleep before the fatigue of a long and anxious journey. Nature, exhausted by the tumultuous agitations of the day, was kinder to me than I expected, and I sunk into a deep and profound sleep, from which, however, I started as the old clock struck two from a turret adjoining to my bed-chamber. I instantly arose, struck a light, wrote the letter I proposed to leave for my uncle, and leaving behind me such articles of dress as were cumbrous in carriage, I deposited the rest of my wardrobe in my valise, glided down stairs, and gained the stable without impediment. Without being quite such a groom as any of my cousins, I had learned at Osbaldistone-Hall to dress and saddle my own horse, and in a few minutes I was mounted and ready for my sally.

As I paced up the old avenue, on which the waning moon threw its light with a pale and whitish tinge, I looked back with a deep and boding sigh towards the walls which contained Diana Vernon, under the despondent impression that we had probably parted to meet no more. It was impossible among the long and irregular

lines of Gothic casements, which now looked ghastly white in the moonlight, to distinguish that of the apartment which she inhabited. "She is lost to me already," thought I, as my eye wandered over the dim and undistinguishable intricacies of architecture offered by the moonlight view of Osbaldistone-Hall — "She is lost to me already, ere I have left the place which she inhabits! What hope is there of my maintaining any correspondence with her when leagues shall lie between?"

While I paused in a reverie of no very pleasing nature, the "iron tongue of time told three upon the drowsy ear of night," and reminded me of the necessity of keeping my appointment with a person of a less interesting description and appearance — Andrew Fairservice.

At the gate of the avenue I found a horseman stationed in the shadow of the wall, but it was not until I had coughed twice, and then called "Andrew," that the horticulturist replied, "I'll warrant it's Andrew."

"Lead the way then," said I, "and be silent if you can till we are past the hamlet in the valley."

Andrew led the way accordingly, and at a much brisker pace than I would have recommended; and so well did he obey my injunctions of keeping silence, that he would return

no answer to my repeated enquiries into the cause of such unnecessary haste. Extricating ourselves by short cuts, known to Andrew, from the numerous stony lanes and bye-paths which intersected each other in the vicinity of the Hall, we reached the open heath; and riding swiftly across it, took our course among barren hills which divide England from Scotland on what are called the Middle Marches. The way, or rather the broken track which we occupied, was a happy interchange of bog and shingles; nevertheless, Andrew relented nothing of his speed, but trotted manfully forward at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour. I was surprised and provoked at the fellow's obstinate persistence, for we made abrupt ascents and descents over ground of a very break-neck character, and traversed the edge of precipices, where a slip of the horse's feet would have consigned the rider to certain death. The moon, at best, afforded a dubious and imperfect light; but in some places we were so much under the shade of the mountain as to be in total darkness, and then I could only trace Andrew by the clatter of his horse's feet, and the fire which they struck from the flints. At first, this rapid motion, and the attention which, for the sake of personal safety, I was compelled to give to the conduct of my horse, was of service, by forcibly diverting my thoughts from the

various painful reflections which must otherwise have pressed on my mind. But at length, after hallooing repeatedly to Andrew to ride slower, I became seriously incensed at his impudent perseverance in refusing either to obey or reply to me. My anger, was, however, quite impotent. I attempted once or twice to get up alongside of my self-willed guide, with the purpose of knocking him off his horse with the buttend of my whip; but Andrew was better mounted than I, and either the spirit of the animal which he bestrode, or more probably some presentiment of my kind intentions towards him, induced him to quicken his pace whenever I attempted to make up to him. On the other hand, I was compelled to exert my spurs to keep him in sight, for without his guidance I was too well aware that I should never find my way through the howling wilderness which we now traversed at such an unwonted pace. I was so angry at length, that I threatened to have recourse to my pistols, and send a bullet after the Hotspur Andrew, which should stop his fiery-footed career, if he did not abate it of his own accord. Apparently this threat made some impression on the tympanum of his ear, however deaf to all my milder entreaties; for he relaxed his pace upon hearing it, and suffering me to close up to him, observed, «There wasna muckle sense in riding at sic a daft-like gate.»

“And what did you mean by doing it at all, you scoundrel?” replied I, for I was in a towering passion, to which, by the way, nothing contributes more than the having recently undergone a spice of personal fear, which, like a few drops of water flung on a glowing fire, is sure to inflame the ardour which it is insufficient to quench.

“What’s your honour’s wull?” replied Andrew, with impenetrable gravity.

“My will, you rascal? — I have been roaring to you this hour to ride slower, and you have never so much as answered me — Are you drunk or mad, to behave so?”

“An it like your honour, I am something dull o’ hearing; and I’ll no deny but I might have maybe ta’en a stirrup-cup at parting frae the auld bigging whare I hae dwalt sae lang; and having naebody to pledge me, nae doubt I was obliged to do myself reason, or else leave the end o’ the brandy stoup to thae papists, and that wad be a waste, as your honour kens.”

This might be all very true, and my circumstances required that I should be on good terms with my guide; I therefore satisfied myself with requiring of him to take his directions from me in future concerning the rate of travelling.

Andrew, emboldened by the mildness of my tone, elevated his own into the pedantic, con-

ceited octave, which was familiar to him on most occasions.

«Your honour winna persuade me, and nae-body shall persuade me, that its either halesome or prudent to tak the night air on thae moors without a cordial o' clowgilliflower water, or a tass of brandy or aquavitæ, or siclike creature-comfort. I hae taen the bent over the Otterscope-rigg a hundred times, day and night, and never could find the way unless I had taen my morning; mair by token that I had whiles twa bits o' ankers o' brandy on ilk side o' me.» —

«In other words, Andrew, you were a smuggler — how does a man of your strict principles reconcile yourself to cheat the revenue?»

«Its a mere spoiling o' the Egyptians,” replied Andrew; «puir auld Scotland suffered aneugh by thae blackguard loons o' excisemen and gaugers, that hae come down on her like locusts since the sad and sorrowfu' Union; its the part of a kind son to bring her a soup o' something that will keep up her auld heart, and that will they nill they, the ill-faar'd thieves.»

Upon more particular enquiry, I found Andrew had frequently travelled these mountain paths as a smuggler, both before and after his establishment at Osbaldistone-Hall, a circumstance which was so far of importance to me,

as it proved his capacity as a guide, notwithstanding the escapade of which he had been guilty at his outset. Even now, though travelling at a more moderate pace, the stirrup-cup, or whatever else had such an effect in stimulating Andrew's motions, seemed not totally to have lost its influence. He often cast a nervous and startled look behind him; and whenever the road seemed at all practicable, shewed symptoms of a desire to accelerate his pace, as if he feared some pursuit from behind. These appearances of alarm gradually diminished as we reached the top of a high bleak ridge, which ran nearly east and west for about a mile, with a very steep descent on either side. The pale beams of the morning were now enlightening the horizon, when Andrew cast a look behind him, and not seeing the appearance of a living being on the moors which we had travelled, his hard features gradually unbent, as he first whistled, then sung, with much glee and little melody, the end of one of his native songs:

“Jenny lass! I think I hae her
Ower the moor amang the heather;
All their clan shall never get her.”

He patted at the same time the neck of the horse which had carried him so gallantly; and

my attention being directed by that action to the animal, I instantly recognized a favourite mare of Thorncliff Osbaldistone. "How is this, sir?" said I sternly; "that is Master Thorncliff's mare!"

"I'll no say but she may aiblins hae been his Honour's, Squire Thorncliff's, in her day, but she's mine now."

"You have stolen her, you rascal."

"Na, na, sir, nae man can wyte me wi' theft — the thing stands this gate, ye see — Squire Thorncliff borrowed ten pund o' me to gang to York Races — deil a boddle wad he pay me back again, and spake o' raddling my banes, as he ca'd it, when I asked him but for my ain back again — now I think it will riddle him or he gets his horse ower the Border again — unless he pays me plack and bawbee, he sall never see a hair o' her tail. I ken a canny chield at Loughmaben, a bit writer lad that put me in the way to sort him — Steal the mear! na, na, far be the sin o' theft frae Andrew Fair-service — I have just arrested her *jurisdictiones fandandy causey*. Thae are bonnie writer words — amaist like the language o' huz gardners and other learned men — it's a pity they're sae dear — thae three words were a' that Andrew got for a lang lawplea, and four ankers o' as gude bran-

dy as was e'er coupit ower craig — Hech sirs! but law's a dear thing."

"You are likely to find it much dearer than you suppose, Andrew, if you proceed in this mode of paying yourself, without legal authority."

"Hout tout, we're in Scotland now (be praised for't), and I can find baith friends and lawyers, and judges too, as weel as ony Osbaldistone o' them a'. My mither's mither's third cousin was cousin to the Provost o' Dumfries, and he winna see a drap o' her bluid wranged. Hout awa, the laws are indifferently administered here to a' men alike; it's no like on yon side, when a chiel may be whuppit awa' wi' ane o' Clerk Jobson's warrants, afore he kens where he is. But they will hae little eneugh law amang them by and bye, and that is ae grand reason that I hae gi'en them gude day."

I was highly provoked at this achievement of Andrew, and considered it as a hard fate, which a second time threw me into collision with a person of such irregular practices. I determined, however, to buy the mare of him, when we should reach the end of our journey, and send her back to my cousin at Osbaldistone-Hall; and with this purpose of reparation, I resolved to make my uncle acquainted from the next post-town. It was needless, I thought, to quarrel with Andrew in the meantime, who had,

after all, acted not very unnaturally for a person in his circumstances. I therefore smothered my resentment, and asked him, what he meant by his last expressions, that there would be little law in Northumberland by and bye?

“Law!” said Andrew, “hout, ay — there will be club-law enough. The priests and the Irish officers, and thae papist cattle that hae been sodgering abroad, because they durst na bide at hame, are a’ fleeing thick in Northumberland e’enow, and thae corbies dinna gather without they smell carrion. As sure as you live, his honour Sir Hildebrand is gaun to stick his horn in the bog — there’s naething but gun and pistol, sword and dagger, amang them — and they’ll be laying on, I’s e warrant; for they’re fearless fules the young Osbaldistone squires, aye craving your honour’s pardon.”

This speech recalled to my memory some suspicions that I myself had entertained, that the jacobites were on the eve of some desperate enterprise. But, conscious it did not become me to be a spy on my uncle’s words and actions, I had rather avoided than availed myself of any opportunity which occurred of remarking upon the signs of the times. Andrew Fairservice felt no such restraint, and doubtless spoke very truly in stating his conviction, that some desperate plots were in agitation, as a reason which determined his resolution to leave the Hall.

“The servants,” he stated, “with the tenantry and others, had been all regularly enrolled and mustered, and they wanted me to take arms also. But I’ll ride in nae siccan troop — they little kenn’d Andrew that asked him. I’ll fight when I like mysell, but it sall neither be for the hoor of Babylon, nor ony hoor in England.”


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CHAPTER XIX.

*Where longs to fall yon rifted spire,  
As weary of the insulting air;  
The poet's thought, the warrior's fire,  
The lover's sighs are sleeping there.*

LANGHORNE.

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AT the first Scotch town which we reached, my guide sought out his friend and counsellor, to consult upon the proper and legal means of converting into his own lawful property the "bonnie creature," which was at present his own only by one of those slight-of-hand arrangements, which still sometimes took place in that once lawless district. I was somewhat diverted with the dejection of his looks on his return. He had, it seems, been rather too communicative to his confidential friend, the attorney; and learned with great dismay, in return for his unsuspecting frankness, that Mr Touthope had, during his absence, been ap-



pointed clerk to the peace of the county, and was bound to communicate to justice all such achievements as that of his friend, Mr Andrew Fairservice. There was a necessity, this alert member of police stated, for arresting the horse, and placing him in Baillie Trumbull's stable, therein to remain at livery, at the rate of twelve shillings (Scotch) per diem, until the question of property was duly tried and debated. He even talked, as if, in strict and rigorous execution of his duty, he ought to detain honest Andrew himself; but on my guide's most piteously entreating his forbearance, he not only desisted from this proposal, but made a present to Andrew of a broken-winded and spavined poney, in order to enable him to pursue his journey. It is true, he qualified this act of generosity by exacting from poor Andrew an absolute cession of his right and interest in the gallant palfrey of Thorncliff Osbaldistone; a transference which Mr Touthope represented as of very little consequence, since his unfortunate friend, as he facetiously observed, was likely to get nothing of the mare excepting the halter.

Andrew seemed woeful and disconcerted, as I screwed out of him these particulars; for his northern pride was cruelly pinched by being compelled to admit that attorneys were attorneys on both sides of the Tweed; and that Mr Clerk Touthope was



not a farthing more sterling coin than Mr Clerk Jobson.

“It wadna hae vexed him half sae muckle to hae been cheated out o’ what might amaist be said to be won with the peril o’ his craig, had it happened amang the Inglishers; but it was an unco thing to see hawks pike out hawks een, or ae kindly Scot cheat anither. But nae doubt things were strangely changed in his country sin’ the sad and sorrowfu’ Union;” an event to which Andrew referred every symptom of depravity or degeneracy which he remarked among his countrymen, more especially the inflammation of reckonings, the diminished size of pint-stoups, and other grievances, which he pointed out to me during our journey.

For my own part, I held myself, as things had turned out, acquitted of all charge of the mare, and wrote to my uncle the circumstances under which she was carried into Scotland, concluding with informing him that she was in the hands of Justice and her worthy representatives, Baillie Trumbull and Mr Clerk Tout-hope, to whom I referred him for farther particulars. Whether the property returned to the Northumbrian fox-hunter, or continued to bear the person of the Scottish attorney, it is unnecessary for me at present to say.

We now pursued our journey to the north-



westward, at a rate much slower than that at which we had achieved our nocturnal retreat from England. One chain of barren and uninteresting hills succeeded another, until the more fertile vale of Clyde opened upon us, and with such dispatch as we might we gained the town, or, as my guide pertinaciously termed it, the city of Glasgow. Of late years, I understand, it has fully deserved the name, which, by a sort of political second sight, my guide distinguished it. An extensive and increasing trade with the West Indies and American colonies, has, if I am rightly informed, laid the foundation of wealth and prosperity, which, carefully strengthened and built upon, may one day support an immense fabric of commercial prosperity; but, in the earlier time of which I speak, the dawn of this splendour had not arisen. The Union had, indeed, opened to Scotland the trade to the English colonies; but, betwixt want of capital, and the national jealousy of the English, the merchants of Scotland were as yet excluded, in a great measure, from the exercise of the privileges which that memorable treaty conferred on them. Glasgow lay upon the wrong side of the island for participating in the east country or continental trade, by which the trifling commerce as yet produced in Scotland chiefly supported itself. Yet, though she then



gave small promise of the commercial eminence to which, I am informed, she seems now likely one day to attain, Glasgow, as the principal central town of the western district of Scotland, was a place of considerable rank and importance. The broad and brimming Clyde, which flows so near its walls, gave the means of an inland navigation of some importance. Not only the fertile plains in its immediate neighbourhood, but the districts of Ayr and Dumfries, regarded Glasgow as their capital, to which they transmitted their produce, and received in return such necessaries and luxuries as their consumption required.

The dusky mountains of the Western Highlands often sent forth wilder tribes to frequent the marts of St Mungo's favourite city. Hordes of wild, shaggy, dwarfish cattle and ponies, conducted by Highlanders, as wild, as shaggy, and sometimes as dwarfish as the animals they had in charge, often traversed the streets of Glasgow. Strangers gazed with surprise on the antique and fantastic dress, and listened to the unknown and dissonant sounds of their language, while the mountaineers, armed even while engaged in this peaceful occupation, with musket and pistol, sword, dagger, and target, stared with astonishment on the articles of luxury of which they knew not the use, and with avidity



which seemed somewhat alarming upon the articles which they knew and valued. It is always with unwillingness that the Highlander quits his deserts, and at this early period it was like tearing a pine from its rock to plant him elsewhere. Yet even then the mountain glens were over-peopled, until thinned occasionally by famine or by the sword, and many of their inhabitants strayed down to Glasgow — there formed settlements — there sought and found employment, though different, indeed, from those of their native hills. This supply of a hardy and useful population was of consequence to the prosperity of the place, furnished the means of carrying on the few manufactures which the town already boasted, and laid the foundation of its future prosperity.

The exterior of the city corresponded with these promising circumstances. The principal street was broad and important, decorated with public buildings, of an architecture rather striking than correct in point of taste, and running between rows of tall houses, built with stone, the fronts of which were occasionally richly ornamented with mason-work, a circumstance which gave the street an imposing air of dignity and grandeur, of which most English towns are in some measure deprived, by the slight, unsubstantial, and perishable quality and appear-



ance of the bricks with which they are constructed.

In the western metropolis of Scotland, my guide and I arrived upon a Sunday morning. The bells pealed from the steeple, and the number of people who thronged the streets, and poured to the churches, announced the reverence paid to this sacred day. We alighted at the door of a jolly hostler-wife, as Andrew called her, the Ostelere of old father Chaucer, by whom we were civilly received. My first impulse, of course, was to seek out Owen, but upon enquiry I found that my attempt would be in vain, «until kirk time was ower.” Not only did my landlady and guide jointly assure me that there wadna be a living soul in the dwelling of Messrs MacVittie, MacFin, and Company, to which Owen’s letter referred me, but, moreover, «far less would I find any of the partners there. They were serious men, and wad be where a’ gude Christians ought to be at sic a time, and that was in the Barony Laigh Kirk.”

Andrew Fairservice, whose disgust at the law of his country had fortunately not extended itself to the other learned professions of his native land, now sung forth the praises of the preacher who was to perform the duty, to which my hostess replied with many loud amens. The



result was, that I determined to go to this popular place of worship, as much with the purpose of learning, if possible, whether Owen had arrived in Glasgow, as with any great expectation of edification. My hopes were exalted by the assurance that if Mr Ephraim MacVittie (worthy man) were in the land of life, he would surely honour the Barony Kirk that day with his presence; and if he chanced to have a stranger within his gates, doubtless he would bring him to the duty along with him. This probability determined my motions, and, under the escort of the faithful Andrew, I set forth for the Barony Kirk.

Upon this occasion, however, I had little occasion for his guidance; for the crowd which forced its way up a steep and rough paved street to hear the most popular preacher in the west of Scotland, would of itself have swept me along with it. Upon attaining the summit of the hill, we turned to the left, and a large pair of folding doors admitted me, amongst others, into the open and extensive burying place which surrounds the Minster or Cathedral Church of Glasgow. The pile is of a gloomy and massive, rather than of an elegant style of Gothic architecture; but its peculiar character is so strongly preserved, and so well suited with the accompaniments that surround it, that the impression



of the first view was awful and solemn in the extreme. I was indeed so much struck, that I resisted for a few minutes all Andrew's efforts to drag me into the interior of the building, so deeply was I engaged in surveying its outward character.

Situated in a populous and considerable town, this solemn and massive pile has the appearance of the most sequestered solitude. High walls divide it from the buildings of the city on one side; on the other, it is bounded by a ravine, through the depth of which, and invisible to the eye, murmurs a wandering rivulet, adding, by its rushing noise, to the imposing solemnity of the scene. On the opposite of the ravine rises a steep bank, covered with firtrees closely planted, whose dusky shade extends itself over the cemetery with an appropriate and gloomy effect. The churchyard itself had a peculiar character; for though in reality extensive, it is small in proportion to the number of respectable inhabitants who are interred within it, and whose graves are almost all covered with tombstones. There is therefore no room for the long rank grass, which, in the ordinary case, partially clothes the surface in these retreats, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. The broad flat monumental stones are placed so close to each other, that the



precincts appear to be flagged with them, and, though roofed only by the heavens, resemble the floor of one of our old English churches, where the pavement is covered with sepulchral inscriptions. The contents of these sad records of mortality, the vain sorrows which they record, the stern lesson which they teach of the nothingness of humanity, the extent of ground which they so closely cover, and their uniform and melancholy tenor, reminded me of the roll of the prophet, which was «written within and without, and there were written therein lamentations and mourning and woe.»

The Cathedral itself corresponds in impressive majesty with these accompaniments. We feel that its appearance is heavy, yet that the effect produced would be destroyed were it lighter or more ornamented. It is the only metropolitan church in Scotland, excepting, as I am informed, the cathedral of Kirkwall in the Orkneys, which remained uninjured at the Reformation; and Andrew Fairservice, who saw with great pride the effect which it produced upon my mind, thus accounted for its preservation. «Ah! it's a brave kirk — nane o' yere whig-maleeries and curliewurlies and open-steek hems about it — a' solid, weel-jointed mason-wark, that will stand as lang as the world, keep hands and gunpowther aff it. It had amaist a doun-



come lang syne at the Reformation, when they pu'd down the kirks of St Andrews and Perth, and thereawa, to cleanse them o' Papery, and idolatry, and image worship, and surplices, and siclike rags o' the muckle hoor that sitteth on seven hills, as if ane was na braid aneugh for her auld hinder end. Sae the commons o' Renfrew, and o' the Barony, and the Gorbals, and a' about, they behoved to come into Glasgow ae fair morning to try their hand on purging the High Kirk o' Popish nick-nackets. But the townsmen o' Glasgow, they were feared their auld edifice might slip the girths in gaun throuh siccan rough physic, sae they rang the common bell, and assembled the train bands wi' took o' drum — by good luck, the worthy James Rabat was Dean o' Guild that year — (and a gude mason he was himsell, made him the keener to keep up the auld bigging,) and the trades assembled, and offered downright battle to the commons, rather than their kirk should coup the crans, as they had done elsewhere. It wasna for luve o' Paperie — na, na! — nane could ever say that o' the trades o' Glasgow — Sae they sune cam to an agreement to take a' the idolatrous statues o' sants (sorrow be on them) out o' their neuks — And sae the bits o' stane idols were broken in pieces by Scripture warrant, and flung into the Molendinar



Burn, and the auld kirk stood as crouse as a cat when the fleas are caimed aff her, and a' body was alike pleased. And I hae heard wise folk say, that if the same had been done in ilka kirk in Scotland, the Reform wad just hae been as pure as it is e'en now, and we wad had mair Christian-like kirks; for I hae been sae lang in England, that naething will drived ont o' my head, that the dog-kennel at Osbal-distone-Hall is better than mony a house o' God in Scotland."

Thus saying, Andrew led the way into the place of worship.



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## CHAPTER XX.

— — — *It strikes an awe  
And terror on my aching sight; the tombs  
And monumental caves of death look cold,  
And shoot a chillness to the trembling heart.*

*Mourning Bride.*

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NOTWITHSTANDING the impatience of my conductor, I could not forbear to pause and gaze for some minutes on the exterior of the building, rendered more impressively dignified by the solitude which ensued when its hitherto open gates were closed, after having, as it were, devoured the multitudes which had lately crowded the church-yard, but now enclosed within the building, were engaged, as the choral swell of voices from within announced to us, in the solemn exercises of devotion. The sound of so many voices, united by the distance into one harmony, and freed from those harsh discor-



dances which jar the ear when heard more near, uniting with the murmuring brook, and the wind which sung amongst the old firs, affected me with a sense of sublimity. All nature, as invoked by the Psalmist whose verses they chaunted, seemed united in offering that solemn praise in which trembling is mixed with joy as she addresses her Maker. I had heard the service of high mass in France, celebrated with all the éclat which the choicest music, the richest dresses, the most imposing ceremonies, could confer on it; yet it fell short in effect of the simplicity of the presbyterian worship. The devotion, in which every one took a share, seemed so superior in effect to that which was recited by musicians, as a lesson which they had learned by rote, that it gave the Scottish worship all the advantage of reality over acting.

As I lingered to catch more of the solemn sound, Andrew, whose impatience became ungovernable, pulled me by the sleeve — “Come awa’, sir — Come awa’, we maunna be late o’ gaun in to disturb the worship; if we bide here, the searchers will be on us, and carry us to the guardhouse for being idlers in kirk-time.”

Thus admonished, I followed my guide, but not, as I had supposed, into the body of the cathedral. “This gate — this gate, sir!” he exclaimed, dragging me off as I made towards



the main entrance of the buildings, — “There’s but cauldrie law-wark gaun on yonder — carnal morality, as dow’d and as fusionless as rue leaves at Yule — Here’s the real savour of doctrine.”

So saying, he entered a small low-arched door, secured by a wicket, which a gravel-looking person seemed on the point of closing, and descended several steps as if into the funeral vaults beneath the church. It was even so; for in these subterranean precincts, why chosen for such a purpose I know not, was established a very singular place of worship.

Conceive, Tresham, an extensive range of low-browed, dark, and twilight vaults, such as are used for sepulchres in other countries, and had long been dedicated to the same purpose in this, a portion of which was seated with pews, and used as a church. The part of the vaults thus occupied, though capable of containing a congregation of many hundreds, bore a small proportion to the darker and more extensive caverns which yawned around what may be termed the inhabited space. In those waste regions of oblivion, dusky banners and tattered escutcheons indicated the graves of those who were once, doubtless, “princes in Israel.” Inscriptions, which could only be read by the painful antiquary, in language as obsolete as the act of devotional charity which they implored, invited the passen-



gers to pray for the souls of those whose bodies rested beneath. Surrounded by these receptacles of the last remains of mortality, I found a numerous congregation engaged in the act of prayer. The Scotch perform this duty in a standing, instead of a kneeling posture, more, perhaps, to take as broad a distinction as possible from the ritual of Rome than for any better reason, since I have observed that in their family worship, as doubtless in their private devotion, they adopt in their immediate address to the Deity that posture which other Christians use as the humblest and most reverential. Standing, therefore, the men being uncovered, a crowd of several hundreds of both sexes, and all ages, listened with great reverence and attention to the extempore, at least the unwritten prayer of an aged clergyman, \* who was very popular in the city. Educated in the same religious persuasion, I

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\* I have in vain laboured to discover this gentleman's name and the period of his incumbency. I do not, however, despair to see these points, with some others which may elude my sagacity, satisfactorily elucidated by one or other of the periodical publications which have devoted their pages to explanatory commentaries on my former volumes; and whose research and ingenuity claim my peculiar gratitude, for having discovered many persons and circumstances connected with my narratives, of which I myself never so much as dreamed.



seriously bent my mind to join in the devotion of the day, and it was not till the congregation resumed their seats that my attention was diverted to the consideration of the appearance of all around me.

At the conclusion of the prayer, most of the men put on their hats or bonnets, and all who had the happiness to have seats sat down. Andrew and I were not of this number, having been too late in entering the church to secure such accommodation. We stood among a number of other persons in the same situation, forming a sort of ring around the seated part of the congregation. Behind and around us were the vaults I have already described; before us the devout audience, dimly shewn by the light which streamed on their faces, through one or two low Gothic windows, such as give air and light to charnel houses. By this were seen the usual variety of countenances, which are generally turned towards a Scotch pastor on such occasions, almost all composed to attention, unless where a father or mother here and there recalls the wandering eyes of a lively child, or disturbs the slumbers of a dull one. The high-boned and harsh countenance of the nation, with the expression of intelligence and shrewdness which it frequently exhibits, is seen to more advantage in the act of devotion, or in the ranks of war, than upon lighter and



more cheerful occasions of assemblage. The discourse of the preacher was well qualified to call forth the various feelings and faculties of his audience.

Age and infirmities had impaired the powers of a voice originally strong and sonorous. He read his text with a pronounciation somewhat inarticulate; but when he closed the Bible, and commenced his sermon, his tones gradually strengthened, as he entered with vehemence into the arguments which he maintained. They related chiefly to the abstract points of the christian faith, subjects grave, deep, and fathomless by mere human reason, but for which, with equal ingenuity and propriety, he sought a key in liberal quotations from the inspired writings. My mind was unprepared to coincide in all his reasoning, nor was I sure that in some instances I rightly comprehended his positions. But nothing could be more impressive than the eager enthusiastic manner of the good old man, and nothing more ingenious than his mode of reasoning. The Scotch, it is well known, are more remarkable for the exercise of their intellectual powers, than for the keenness of their feelings; they are, therefore, more moved by logic than by rhetoric, and more attracted by acute and argumentative reasoning and doctrinal points, than influenced by the enthusiastic appeals to



the heart and to the passions; by which popular preachers in other countries win the favour of their hearers.

Among the attentive groupe which I now saw, might be distinguished various expressions similar to those of the audience in the famous cartoon of Paul preaching at Athens. Here sat a zealous and intelligent Calvinist, with brows bent just as much as to indicate profound attention lips slightly compressed; eyes fixed on the minister, with an expression of decent pride, as if sharing the triumph of his argument; the forefinger of the right hand touching successively those of the left, as the preacher, from argument to argument, ascended towards his conclusion. Another, with fiercer and sterner look, intimated at once his contempt of all who doubted the creed of his pastor, and his joy at the appropriate punishment denounced against them. A third, perhaps belonging to a different congregation, and present only by accident or curiosity, had the appearance of internally impeaching some link of the reasoning; and you might plainly read, in the slight motion of his head, his doubts as to the soundness of the preacher's argument. The greater part listened with a calm satisfied countenance, expressive of a conscious merit in being present, and in listening to such an ingenious discourse, although, perhaps, unable entirely to comprehend



it. The women in general belonged to this last division of the audience; the old, however, seeming more grimly intent upon the abstract doctrines laid before them; while the younger females permitted their eyes occasionally to make a modest circuit around the congregation; and some of them, Tresham, (if my vanity did not greatly deceive me,) contrived to distinguish your friend and servant, as a handsome young stranger, and an Englishman. As to the rest of the congregation, the stupid gaped, yawned, or slept, till awakened by the application of their more zealous neighbours' heels to their shins; and the idle indicated their inattention by the wandering of their eyes, but dared give no more decided token of weariness. Amid the Lowland costume of coat and cloak, I could here and there discern a Highland plaid, the wearer of which, resting on his basket-hilt, sent his eyes among the audience with the unrestrained curiosity of savage wonder; and who, in all probability, was inattentive to the sermon, for a very pardonable reason — because he did not understand the language in which it was delivered. The martial and wild look, however, of these stragglers, added a kind of character which the congregation could not have exhibited without them. They were more numerous, Andrew afterwards observed, owing to some cattle fair in the neighbourhood.



Such was the groupe of countenances, rising tier on tier, discovered to my critical inspection by such sunbeams as forced their way through the narrow Gothic lattices of the Laigh Kirk of Glasgow; and having illuminated the attentive congregation, lost themselves in the vacuity of the vaults behind, giving to the nearer part of their labyrinth a sort of imperfect twilight, and leaving their recesses in an utter darkness, which gave them the appearance of being interminable.

I have already said, that I stood with others in the exterior circle, with my face to the preacher, and my back to those vaults which I have so often mentioned. My position rendered me particularly obnoxious to any interruption which arose from any slight noise occurring amongst these retiring arches, where the least sound was multiplied by a thousand echoes. The occasional sound of rain-drops, which, admitted through some cranny in the ruined roof, fell successively, and plashed upon the pavement beneath, caused me turn my head more than once to the place from whence it seemed to proceed; and when my eyes took that direction, I found it difficult to withdraw them; such is the pleasure our imagination receives from the attempt to penetrate as far as possible into an intricate labyrinth, imperfectly lighted, and exhibiting objects which irritate our curiosity, only because they acquire



a mysterious interest from being undefined and dubious. My eyes became habituated to the gloomy atmosphere to which I directed them, and insensibly my mind became more interested in their discoveries than in the metaphysical subtleties which the preacher was enforcing.

My father had often checked me for this wandering mood of mind, arising perhaps from an excitability of imagination to which he was a stranger; and the finding myself at present solicited by these temptations to inattention, recalled the time when I used to walk, led by his hand, to Mr Shower's chapel, and the earnest injunctions which he then laid on me to redeem the time, because the days were evil. At present, the picture which my thoughts suggested, far from fixing my attention, destroyed the portion I had yet left, by conjuring up to my recollection the peril in which his affairs now stood. I endeavoured, in the lowest whisper I could frame, to request Andrew to obtain information, whether any of the gentlemen of the firm of MacVittie, etc. were at present in the congregation. But Andrew, wrapped in profound attention to the sermon, only replied to my suggestion by hard punches with his elbow, as signals to me to remain silent. I next strained my eyes with equally bad success, to see, if among the sea of up-turned faces, which bent their eyes on the pulpit as a common centre,



I could discover the sober and business-like physiognomy of Owen. But not among the broad beavers of the Glasgow citizens, or the yet broader brimmed lowland bonnets of the peasants of Lanarkshire, could I see any thing resembling the decent periwig, starched ruffles, or the uniform suit of light brown garments appertaining to the head-clerk of the establishment of Osbaldistone and Tresham. My anxiety now returned on me with such violence, as to overpower not only the novelty of the scene around me, by which it had hitherto been diverted, but moreover my sense of decorum. I pulled Andrew hard by the sleeve, and intimated my wish to leave the church, and pursue my investigation as I could. Andrew, obdurate in the Laigh Kirk of Glasgow, as on the mountains of Cheviot, for some time deigned me no answer; and it was only when he found I could not otherwise be kept quiet that he condescended to inform me, that being once in the church, we could not leave it till service was over, because the doors were locked so soon as the prayers began. Having thus spoken in a brief and peevish whisper, Andrew again assumed the air of intelligent and critical importance, and attention to the preacher's discourse.

While I endeavoured to make a virtue of necessity, and recal my attention to the sermon,



I was again disturbed by a singular interruption. A voice from behind whispered distinctly in my ear, "You are in danger in this city." — I turned round as if mechanically.

One or two starched and ordinary-looking mechanics stood beside and behind me, stragglers, who, like ourselves, had been too late in obtaining entrance. But a glance at their faces satisfied me, though I could hardly say why, that none of these was the person who had spoken to me. Their countenances seemed all composed to attention to the sermon, and not one of them returned any glance of intelligence to the inquisitive and startled look with which I surveyed them. A massive round pillar, which was close behind us, might have concealed the speaker the instant he had uttered his mysterious caution; but wherefore it was given in such a place, or to what species of danger it directed my attention, or by whom the warning was uttered, were points on which my imagination lost itself in conjecture. It would, however, I concluded, be repeated, and I resolved to keep my countenance turned towards the clergyman, that the whisperer might be tempted to renew his communication under the idea that the first had passed unobserved.

My plan succeeded. I had not resumed the appearance of attention to the preacher for five



minutes, when the same voice whispered, "Listen — but do not look back." I kept my face in the same direction. "You are in danger in this place," the voice proceeded; "so am I — Meet me to-night on the Brigg, at twelve preceesely — keep at home till the gloaming, and avoid observation."

Here the voice ceased, and I instantly turned my head. But the speaker had, with still greater promptitude, glided behind the pillar, and escaped my observation. I was determined to catch a sight of him, if possible, and, extricating myself from the outer circle of hearers, I also stepped behind the column. All there was empty; and I could only see a figure wrapped in a mantle, whether a Lowland cloak, or Highland plaid, I could not distinguish, which traversed, like a phantom, the dreary vacuity of vaults which I have described.

I made an instinctive attempt to pursue the mysterious form, which glided away, and vanished in the vaulted cemetery, like the spectre of one of the numerous dead who rested within its precincts. I had little chance of arresting the course of one obviously determined not to be spoken with; but that little chance was lost by my stumbling and falling before I had made three steps from the column. The obscurity which occasioned my misfortune covered my



disgrace; which I accounted rather lucky, for the preacher, with that stern authority which the Scottish ministers assume for the purpose of keeping order in their congregations, interrupted his discourse, to desire the "proper officer" to take into custody the causer of this disturbance in the place of worship. As the noise, however, was not repeated, the beadle, or whatever else he was called, did not think it necessary to be rigorous in searching out the offender, so that I was enabled, without attracting farther observation, to place myself by Andrew's side in my original position. The service proceeded, and closed without the occurrence of any thing else worthy of notice.

As the congregation departed and dispersed, my friend Andrew exclaimed — "See, yonder is worthy Mr MacVittie and Mrs MacVittie, and Miss Alison MacVittie, and Mr Thamas MacFin, that they say is to Marry Miss Alison, if a' bowls row right — she'll hae a hantle siller, if she's no that bonnie."

My eyes took the direction he pointed out. Mr MacVittie was a tall thin elderly man, with hard features, thick grey eyebrows, light eyes, and, as I imagined, a sinister expression of countenance, from which my heart recoiled. I remembered the warning I had received in the church, and hesitated at addressing this person,



though I could not allege to myself any rational ground of dislike or suspicion.

I was yet in suspense, when Andrew, who mistook my hesitation for bashfulness, proceeded to exhort me to lay it aside. "Speak till him — speak till him, Mr Francis — he's no provost yet, though they say he'll be my lord neist year. Speak till him, then; he'll gie ye a decent answer for as rich as he is, unless ye were wanting siller frae him — they say he's dour to draw his purse."

It immediately occurred to me, that if this merchant were really of the churlish and avaricious disposition which Andrew intimated, there might be some caution necessary in making myself known, as I could not tell how accounts might stand between my father and him. This consideration came in aid of the mysterious hint which I had received, and the dislike which I had conceived at the man's countenance. Instead of addressing myself directly to him, as I had designed to have done, I contented myself with desiring Andrew to enquire at Mr MacVittie's house the address of Mr Owen, an English gentleman; and I charged him not to mention the person from whom he received the commission, but to bring me the result to the small inn where we lodged. This Andrew promised to do. He said something of the duty of my attending the



evening service; but added, with a causticity natural to him, that „in troth, if folk could na keep their legs still, but wad needs be coupling the creels ower through-stanes, af if they wad raise the very dead folk wi' the clatter, a kirk wi' a chimley in't was fittest for them.”



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## CHAPTER XXI.

*On the Rialto, every night at twelve,  
I take my evening's walk of meditation:  
There we two will meet —*

### *Venice Preserved.*

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FULL of sinister augury, for which, however, I could assign no satisfactory cause, I shut myself up in my apartment at the inn, and having dismissed Andrew, after resisting his importunity to accompany him to St Enoch's Kirk, where, he said, «a soulsearching divine was to haud forth," I set myself seriously to consider what were best to be done. I never was, what is properly called, superstitious; but I suppose all men, in situations of peculiar doubt and difficulty, when they have exercised their reason to little purpose, are apt, in a sort of despair, to abandon the reins to their imagination, and be guided either altogether by chance, or by those whimsical impressions which



take possession of the mind, and to which we give way as if to involuntary impulses. There was something so singularly repulsive in the hard features of the Scotch trader, that I could not resolve to put myself into his hands without transgressing every caution which could be derived from the rules of physiognomy. On the other hand, the warning voice behind me, the form which flitted away like a vanishing shadow through those vaults, which might be termed, "the valley of the shadow of death," had something captivating for the imagination of a young man, who, you will farther please to remember, was a young poet.

If danger was around me, as the mysterious communication intimated, how could I learn its nature, or the means of averting it, but by meeting my unknown counsellor, to whom I could see no reason for imputing any other than kind intentions. Rashleigh and his machinations occurred more than once to my remembrance; but so rapid had my journey been, that I could not suppose him apprised of my arrival in Glasgow, much less prepared to play off any stratagem against my person. In my temper also I was bold and confident, strong and active in person, and in some measure accustomed to the use of arms, in which the French youth of all kinds were then initiated. I did not fear any single



opponent; assassination was neither the vice of the age nor of the country; the place selected for our meeting was too public to admit any suspicion of meditated violence. In a word, I resolved to meet my mysterious counsellor on the bridge, as he had requested, and to be afterwards guided by circumstances. Let me not conceal from you, Tresham, what at the time I endeavoured to conceal from myself — the subdued, yet secretly cherished hope, that Diana Vernon might, — by what chance I knew not, — through what means I could not guess, — have some connection with this strange and dubious intimation, conveyed at a time and place, and in a manner so surprising. She alone, whispered this insidious hope — she alone knew of my journey — from her own account, she possessed friends and influence in Scotland; — she had furnished me with a talisman, whose power I was to invoke when all other aid failed me — who, then, but Diana Vernon possessed either means, knowledge, or inclination for averting the dangers, by which, as it seemed, my steps were surrounded? This flattering view of my very doubtful case pressed itself upon me again and again. It insinuated itself into my thoughts, though very bashfully, before the hour of dinner; it displayed its attractions more boldly during the course of my frugal meal, and became so



courageously intrusive during the succeeding half hour, (aided perhaps by the flavour of a few glasses of most excellent claret) that, with a sort of desperate attempt to escape from a delusive seduction, to which I felt the danger of yielding, I pushed my glass from me, threw aside my dinner, seized my hat, and rushed into the open air with the feeling of one who would fly from his own thoughts. Yet perhaps I yielded to the very feelings from which I seemed to fly, since my steps insensibly led me to the bridge over the Clyde, the place assigned for the rendezvous by my mysterious monitor.

Although I had not partaken of my repast until the hours of evening church service were over, — in which, by the way, I complied with the religious scruples of my landlady, who hesitated to dress a hot dinner between sermons, and also with the admonition of my unknown friend, to keep my apartment till twilight, — several hours had still to pass away betwixt the time of my appointment and that at which I reached the assigned place of meeting. The interval, as you will readily credit, was wearisome enough; and I can hardly explain to you how it passed away. Various groups of persons, all of whom, young and old, seemed impressed with a reverential feeling of the sanctity of the day, passed along the large open meadow which lies on the eastern



bank of the Clyde, and serves as a bleaching-field and pleasure-walk for the inhabitants, or passed with slow steps the long bridge which communicates with the western district of the county. All that I remember of them was the general, yet not unpleasing intimation of a devotional character impressed on each little party, formally assumed perhaps by some, but sincerely characterizing the greater number, which hushed the petulant gaiety of the young into a tone of more quiet, yet more interesting interchange of sentiments, and suppressed the vehement argument and protracted disputes of those of more advanced age. Notwithstanding the numbers who passed me, no general sound of the human voice was heard; few turned again to take a few minutes voluntary exercise, to which the leisure of the evening, and the beauty of the surrounding scenery, seemed to invite them: All hurried to their homes and resting-places. To one accustomed to the mode of spending Sunday evenings abroad, even among the French Calvinists, there seemed something Judaical, yet at the same time striking and affecting, in this mode of keeping the Sabbath holy. Insensibly I felt my mode of sauntering by the side of the river, and crossing successively the various persons who were passing homeward, and without tarrying or delay, must expose me to observation at least, if not to cen-



sure, and I slunk out of the frequented path, and found a trivial occupation for my mind in marshalling my revolving walk in such a manner as should least render me obnoxious to observation. The different alleys lined out through this extensive meadow, and which are planted with trees, like the Park of St James's, in London, gave me facilities for carrying into effect these childish manœuvres.

As I walked down one of these avenues, I heard, to my surprise, the sharp and conceited voice of Andrew Fairservice, raised by a sense of self-consequence to a pitch somewhat higher than others seemed to think consistent with the solemnity of the day. To slip behind the row of trees under which I walked was perhaps no very dignified proceeding, but it was the easiest mode of escaping his observation, and perhaps his impertinent assiduity, and still more intrusive curiosity. As he passed, I heard him communicate to a grave-looking man, in a black coat, a slouched hat, and Geneva cloak, the following sketch of a character, which my self-love, while revolting against it as a caricature, could not help recognizing as a likeness.

„Ay, ay, Mr Hammorgaw, it's e'en as I tell ye — He's no a'together sae void o' sense neither; he has a gloaming sight o' what's reasonable — that is anes and awa' — a glisk and nae mair —



but he's crack-brained and cockle-headed about his nipperty tipperty poetry nonsense — He'll glowr at an auld warld barkit aik-snag as if it were a queezmaddam in full bearing; and a naked craig wi' a burn jawing ower'tis unto him as a garden garnished with flowering knots and choice pot-herbs; then, he wad rather claver wi' a daft quean they ca' Diana Vernon (well I wot they might ca' her Diana of the Ephesians, for she's little better than a heathen — better? she's waur — a Roman — a mere Roman) — He'll claver wi' her, or ony ither idle slut, rather than hear what might do him gude a' the days o' his life, frae you or me, Mr Hammorgaw, or ony ither sober and sponsible person. Reason, sir, is what he canna endure — he's a' for your vanities and volubilities; and he ance tell'd me, (puir blinded creature) that the Psalms of David were excellent poetry! as if the holy Psalmist thought o' rattling rhymes in a bladder, like his ane silly clinkum-clankum things that he ca's verse. Gude help him! twe lines o' Davie Lindsay wad ding a' he ever clerkit."

While listening to this perverted account of my temper and studies, you will not be surprised if I meditated for Mr Fairservice the unpleasant surprise of a broken pate on the first decent opportunity. His friend only intimated his intention by « Ay, ay," and « Is't e'en sae?" and such



like expressions of interest at the proper breaks in Mr Fairservice's harangue, until at length, in answer to some observation of greater length, the import of which I only collected from my trusty guide's reply, honest Andrew answered, "Tell him a bit o' my mind, quoth ye? — Wha wad be fule then but Andrew? — He's a red-wud devil, man! — He's like Giles Heathertap's auld boar; ye need but shake a clout at him to make him turn and gore. Bide wi' him, say ye? — Troth, I kenna what for I bide wi' him mysell — But the lad's no a bad lad after a'; and he needs some carefu' body to look after him. He hasna the right grip o' his hand — the gowd slips throught't like water, man; and it's no that ill a thing to be near him when his purse is in his hand, and it's seldom out o't. And then he's come o' gude kith and kin — My heart warms to the puir thoughtless callant, Mr Hammorgaw — and then the penny fee" —

In the latter part of this instructive communication, Mr Fairservice lowered his voice to a tone better beseeeming the conversation in a place of public resort on a Sabbath evening, and his companion and he were soon beyond my hearing. My feelings of hasty resentment soon subsided under the conviction, that, as Andrew himself might have said, "A hearkener always hears a bad tale of himself," and that whoever should



happen to overhear their character discussed in their own servants'-hall, must prepare to undergo the scalpel of such an anatomist as Mr Fairservice. The incident was so far useful, as, including the feelings to which it gave rise, it sped away a part of the time which hung so heavily on my hand.

Evening had now closed, and the growing darkness gave to the broad, still, and deep expanse of the brimful river, first a hue sombre and uniform, then a dismal and turbid appearance, partially lighted by a waning and pallid moon. The massive and ancient bridge which stretches across the river, was now but dimly visible, and resembled that which Mirza, in his unequalled Vision, has described as traversing the valley of Bagdad. The low-browed arches, seen as imperfectly as the dusky current which they bestrode, seemed rather caverns which swallowed up the gloomy waters of the river, than apertures contrived for their passage. With the advancing night the stillness of the scene increased. There was yet a twinkling light occasionally seen to glide along by the river, which conducted home one or two of the small parties, who, after the abstinence and religious duties of the day, had partaken of a social supper, the only meal at which the rigid presbyterians made some advance to sociality on the Sabbath. Occasionally, also,



the hoofs of a horse were heard, whose rider, after spending the Sunday in Glasgow, was directing his steps towards his residence in the country. These sounds and sights became gradually of more rare occurrence. At length they altogether ceased, and I was left to enjoy my solitary walk on the shores of the Clyde in solemn silence, broken only by the tolling of the successive hours from the steeples of the churches.

But as the night advanced, my impatience at the uncertainty of the situation in which I was placed increased every moment, and became nearly ungovernable. I began to question whether I had been imposed upon by the trick of a fool, the raving of a madman, or the studied machinations of a villain, and paced the little sort of quay or pier adjoining to the entrance to the bridge in a state of incredible anxiety and vexation. At length the hour of twelve o'clock swung its summons over the city from the belfrey of the metropolitan church of St Mungo, and was answered and vouched by all the others, like dutiful diocesans. The echoes had scarcely ceased to repeat the last sound, when a human form — the first I had seen for two hours — appeared passing along the bridge from the western shore of the river. I advanced to meet him with a feeling as if my fate depended on the result of the interview, so much had my anxiety been wound



up by protracted expectation. All that I could remark of the passenger as we advanced towards each other was, that his frame was rather beneath than above the middle size, but apparently strong, thick-set, and muscular; his dress a horseman's wrapping-coat. I slackened my pace, and almost paused as I advanced, in expectation that he would address me. But to my inexpressible disappointment, he passed without speaking, and I had no pretence for being the first to address one, who, notwithstanding his appearance at the very hour of appointment, might, nevertheless, be an absolute stranger. I stopped after he had passed me, and looked after him, uncertain whether I ought not to follow him. The stranger walked on till near the eastern end of the bridge, then paused, looked back, and, turning round, again advanced towards me. I resolved that this time he should not have the apology for silence proper to apparitions, who, it is vulgarly supposed, cannot speak until they are spoken to. "You walk late, sir," said I, as we met a second time.

"I bide tryste," was the reply, "and so I think do you, Mr Osbaldistone."

"You are then the person who requested me to meet you here at this unusual hour?"

"I am," he replied. "Follow me, and you shall know my reasons."



“Before following you, I must know your name and purpose,” I answered.

“I am a man,” was the reply; “and my purpose is friendly to you.”

“A man?” I repeated. “That is a very brief description.”

“It will serve for one who has no other to give,” said the stranger. “He that is without name, without friends, without coin, without country, is still at least a man; and he that has all these is no more.”

“Yet this is still too general an account of yourself, to say the least of it, to establish your credit with a stranger.”

“It is all I mean to give, howsoe’er; you may chuse to follow me, or to remain without the information I desire to afford you.”

“Can you not give me that information here?” I answered.

“You must receive it from your eyes, not from my tongue — you must follow me, or remain in ignorance of the information which I have to give you.”

There was something short, determined, and even stern in the man’s manner, not certainly well calculated to conciliate undoubting confidence.

“What is it you fear?” he said, impatiently. “To whom, think ye, your life is of such con-



sequence, that they should seek to bereave ye of it?"

"I fear nothing," I replied firmly, though somewhat hastily. "Walk on — I attend you."

We proceeded, contrary to my expectation, to re-enter the town, and glided like mute spectres, side by side, up its empty and silent streets. The high and gloomy stone fronts, with the variegated ornaments and pediments of the windows, looked yet taller and more sable by the imperfect moon-shine. Our walk was for some minutes in perfect silence. At length my conductor spoke.

"Are you afraid?"

"I retort your own words," I replied; "wherefore should I fear?"

"Because you are with a stranger — perhaps an enemy, in a place where you have no friends and many enemies."

"I neither fear you nor them; I am young, active, and armed."

"I am not armed," replied my conductor; "but no matter, a willing hand never lacked weapon. You say you fear nothing; but if you knew who was by your side, perhaps you might underlie a tremor."

"And why should I?" I replied. "I again repeat, I fear nought that you can do."

"Nought that I can do? — Be it so. But do



you not fear the consequences of being found with one whose very name whispered in this lonely street would make the stones themselves rise up to apprehend him — on whose head half the men in Glasgow would build their fortune as on a found treasure, had they the luck to grip him by the collar — the sound of whose apprehension were as welcome at the Cross of Edinburgh as ever the news of a field stricken and won in Flanders.”

“And who then are you, whose name should create so deep a feeling of terror?” I replied.

“No enemy of yours, since I am conveying you to a place, where, were I myself recognised and identified, irons to the heels, and hemp to the craig, would be my brief dooming.”

I paused and stood still on the pavement, drawing back so as to have the most perfect view of my companion which the light afforded, and which was sufficient to guard me against any sudden motion of assault.

“You have said,” I answered, “either too much or too little — too much to induce me to confide in you as a mere stranger, since you avow yourself a person amenable to the laws of the country in which we are — and too little, unless you could shew that you are unjustly subjected to their rigour.”

As I ceased to speak, he made a step towards



me. I drew back instinctively, and laid my hand on the hilt of my sword.

„What,” said he, „on an unarmed man, and your friend?”

„I am yet ignorant if you are either the one or the other,” replied I; „and, to say the truth, your language and manner might well entitle me to doubt both.”

„It is manfully spoken,” replied my conductor; „and I respect him whose hand can keep his head. — I will be frank and free with you — I am conveying you to prison.”

„To prison!” I exclaimed; „by what warrant, or for what offence? — You shall have my life sooner than my liberty — I defy you, and I will not follow you a step farther.”

„I do not,” he said, „carry you there as a prisoner. I am,” he added, drawing himself haughtily up, „neither a messenger nor sheriff’s officer; I carry you to see a prisoner from whose lips you will learn the risk in which you presently stand. *Your* liberty is little risked by the visit; mine is in some peril; but that I readily encounter on your account, for I care not for risk, and I love a free young blood, that kens no protector but the cross of the sword.”

While he spoke thus we had reached the principal street, and were pausing before a large building of hewn stone, garnished, as I thought



I could perceive, with gratings of iron before the windows.

„Muckle,” said the stranger, whose language became more broadly national as he assumed a tone of colloquial freedom — „Muckle wad the provost and baillies o’ Glasgow gie to hae him sitting with iron garters to his hose within their tolbooth, that now stands wi’ his legs as free as the red deer’s on the outside on’t. And little wad it avail them; for an’ if they had me there wi’ a stane’s weight o’ iron at every ancle, I would shew them a toom room and a lost lodger before to-morrow — But come on, what stint ye for?”

As he spoke thus, he tapped a low wicket, and was answered by a sharp voice, as of one awakened from a dream or reverie, — „Fa’s tat? — Wha’s that, I wad say? — and fat a de’il want ye at this hour at e’en? — clean again rules — clean again rules, as they ca’ them,”

The protracted tone in which the last words were uttered, betokened that the speaker was again composing himself to slumber. But my guide spoke in a loud whisper, „Dougall, man! hae ye forgotten Ha nun Gregaragh?”

„Deil a bit, deil a bit,” was the ready and lively response, and I heard the internal guardian of the prison-gate bustle up with great alacrity. A few words were exchanged between my conductor and the turnkey, in a language to which



I was an absolute stranger. The bolts revolved, but with a caution which marked the apprehension that the noise might be overheard, and we stood within the vestibule of the prison of Glasgow, a small, but strong guard-room, from which a narrow stair-case led upwards, and one or two low entrances conducted to apartments on the same level with the outward gate, all secured with the jealous strength of wickets, bolts, and bars. The walls, otherwise naked, were not unsuitably garnished with iron fetters, and other uncouth implements, which might be designed for purposes still more inhuman, interspersed with partizans, guns, pistols of antique manufacture, and other weapons of defence and offence.

At finding myself so unexpectedly fortuitously, and, as it were, by stealth, introduced within one of the legal fortresses of Scotland, I could not help recollecting my adventure in Northumberland, and fretting at the strange incidents which again, without any demerits of my own, threatened to place me in a dangerous and disagreeable collision with the laws of the country, which I visited only in the capacity of a stranger.

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“While I have neglected pipes and tabors, and all the whimsical combinations of chivalry, still I am informed that they floated in the fields of ancient fame. But you will allow their exterior appearance is not so peculiarly interesting to the uninformed spectator as that of a fine painting. — Who is the person here represented?”

“My grandfather — he shared the misfortunes of Charles I.; and, I am sorry to add, the excesses of his son. Our patrimonial estate was greatly impaired by his prodigality, and was altogether lost by his successor, my unfortunate father. But peace be with them who have got it — it was lost in the cause of loyalty.”

“Your father, I presume, suffered in the political dissensions of the period?”

“He did indeed; he lost his all. And hence is his child a dependent orphan; eating the bread of others; subjected to their caprices, and compelled to study their inclinations: Yet prouder of having had such a father, than if, playing a more prudent, but less upright part, he had left me possessor of all the fair baronies which his family once possessed.”

As she thus spoke, the entrance of the servants with the dinner cut off all conversation, but that of a general nature.



When our hasty meal was concluded, and the wine placed on the table, the domestic informed us, "that Mr Rashleigh had desired to be told when our dinner was removed."

"Tell him," said Miss Vernon, "we shall be happy to see him if he will step this way — place another wine-glass and chair, and leave the room. — You must retire with him when he goes away," she continued, addressing herself to me; "even my liberality cannot spare a gentleman above eight hours out of the twenty-four; and I think we have been together for at least that length of time."

"The old scythe-man has moved so rapidly," I answered, "that I could not count his strides."

"Hush!" said Miss Vernon, "here comes Rashleigh; and she drew off her chair, to which I had approached mine rather closely, so as to place a greater distance between us.

A modest tap at the door; a gentle manner of opening when invited to enter; a studied softness and humility of step and deportment, announced that the education of Rashleigh Osbaldistone at the College of St Omers accorded well with the ideas I entertained of the manners of an accomplished Jesuit. I need not add, that, as a sound protestant, these ideas were not the most favourable. "Why should you



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